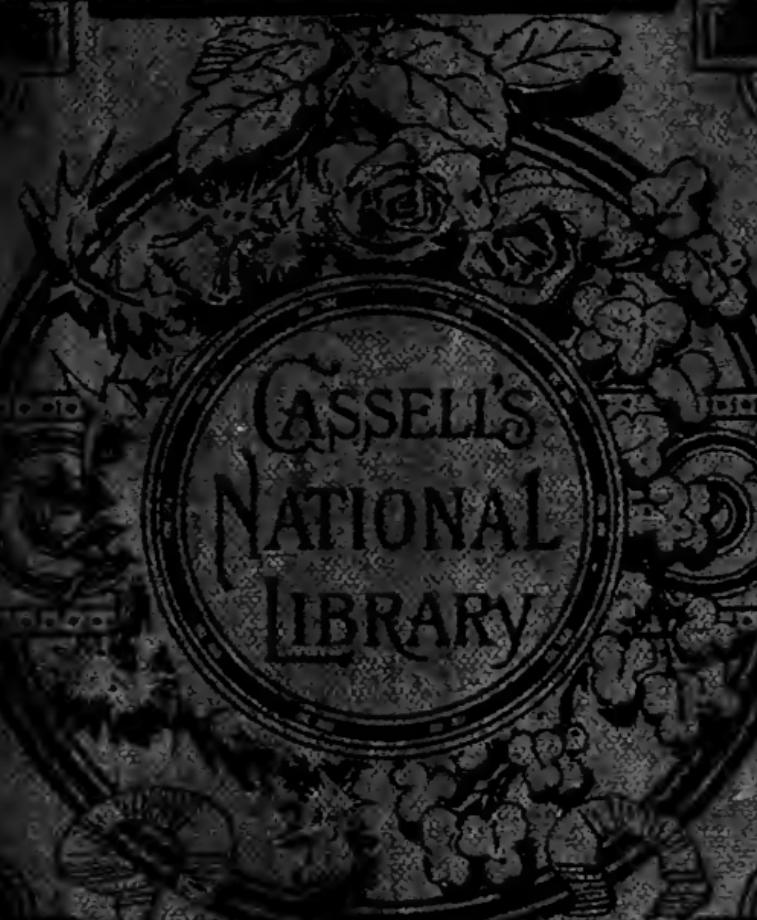


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MARTIN LUTHER



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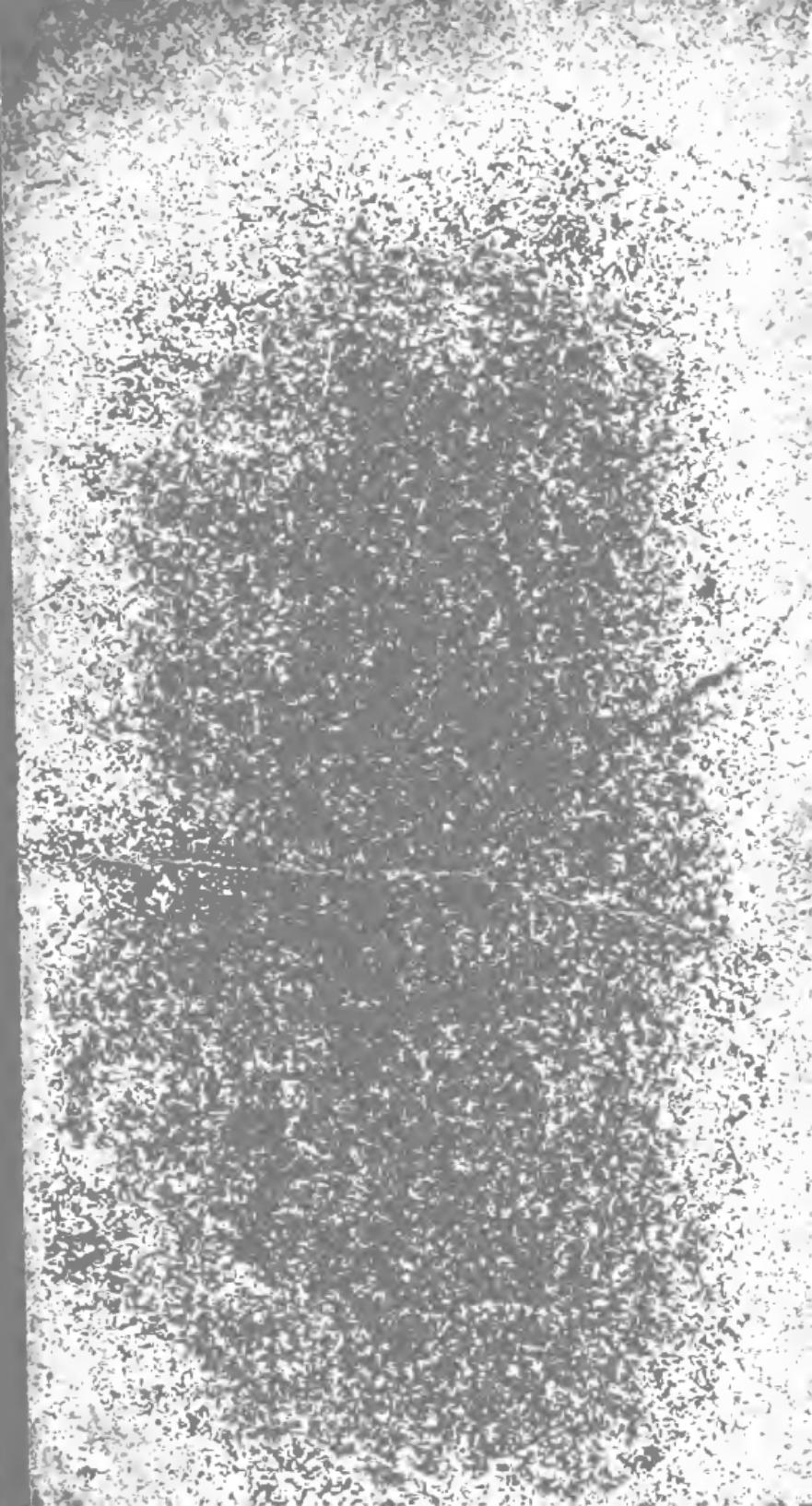
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SELECTIONS FROM THE

# TABLE TALK OF MARTIN LUTHER.

TRANSLATED BY

CAPTAIN HENRY BELL.



CASSELL & COMPANY, LIMITED:

LONDON, PARIS, NEW YORK & MELBOURNE.

1886.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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MARTIN LUTHER died on the 18th of February, 1546, and the first publication of his “Table Talk”—*Tischreden*—by his friend, Johann Goldschmid (Aurifaber), was in 1566, in a substantial folio. The talk of Luther was arranged, according to its topics, into eighty chapters, each with a minute index of contents. The whole work in a complete octavo edition, published at Stuttgart and Leipzig in 1836, occupies 1,390 closely printed pages, equivalent to 2,780 pages, or full fourteen volumes, of this Library.

The nearest approach to a complete and ungarbled translation into English was that of Captain Henry Bell, made in the reign of Charles the First, under the circumstances set forth by himself; but even that was not complete. Other English versions have subjected Luther’s opinions to serious manipulation, nothing being

added, but anything being taken away that did not chance to agree with the editor's digestion. Even the folio of Captain Bell's translation, from which these Selections have been printed, has been prepared for reprint by some preceding editor, whose pen has been busy in revision of the passages he did mean to reprint. In these Selections every paragraph stands unabridged, exactly as it was translated by Captain Bell; and there has been no other purpose governing the choice of matter than a resolve to make it as true a presentment as possible of Luther's mind and character. At least one other volume of *Selections from the Table-Talk of Martin Luther* will be given in this Library.

Johann Goldschmid, the Aurifaber, and thereby true worker in gold, who first gave Luther's Table-Talk to the world, was born in 1519. He was a disciple of Luther, thirty-six years younger than his master. Luther was born at Eisleben in 1483, and his father, a poor mincr, presently settled at Mansfcld, the town in which Goldschmid afterwards was born. Johann Goldschmid was sent by

Count Albrecht of Mansfeld, in 1537, to the University of Wittenberg, where Luther had been made, in 1508, Professor of Philosophy, and where, on the 31st of October, 1517, he had nailed his ninety-five propositions against indulgences to the church door at the castle. Luther had completed his translation of the Bible three years before Johann Goldschmid went to Wittenberg. In 1540 Goldschmid was recalled from the University to act as tutor to Count Albrecht's children. In 1544 Goldschmid was army chaplain with the troops from Mansfeld in the French war; but in 1545 he was sent back to Wittenberg for special study of theology. It was then that he attached himself to Luther as his *famulus* and house-companion during the closing months of Luther's life, began already to collect from surrounding friends passages of his vigorous "Table Talk," and remained with Luther till the last, having been present at his death in Eisleben in 1546. He then proceeded steadily with the collection of Luther's sayings and opinions expressed among his friends. He was army chaplain among

the soldiers of Johann Friedrich, of Saxony ; he spent half a year also in a Saxon prison. He became, in 1551, court preacher at Weimar ; but in 1562 was deprived of his office, and then devoted himself to the forming of an Eisleben edition of those works of Luther, which had not already been collected. In 1566 he was called to a pastorate at Erfurt, where he had many more troubles before his death. Aurifaber died on the 18th of November, 1575.

H. M.

## THE TESTIMONY OF JO. AURIFABER, DOCTOR IN DIVINITY, CONCERNING LUTHER'S DIVINE DISCOURSES.

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AND whereas hitherto I have caused certain tomes of the Books, Sermons, Writings, and Missives of Luther to be printed at Eisleben, so have I also now finished this tome of his Discourses, and have ordered the same to be printed, which at the first were collected together out of the Manuscripts of these Divine Discourses, which that Reverend Father Anthony Lauterbach himself noted and wrote out of the holy mouth of Luther, and afterwards the same by me were collected into sure and certain Loci Communes, or Common-places, and distributed.

And whereas I, Joannes Aurifaber, in the years 1545 and 1546, before the death of that most famous Divine, Luther, was much with and about him, and with all diligence writ and noted down

many most excellent Histories and Acts, and other most necessary and useful things which he related : I have therefore set in order and brought the same also into this tome.

Now, forasmuch as very excellent declaration is made in this tome of all the Articles and chief points of Christian Religion, Doctrine, and Faith ; and also therein are found necessary Rules, Questions and Answers, many fair Histories, all sorts of Learnings, Comforts, Advices, Prophecies, Warnings, and Admonitions : I have therefore thought it a thing fitting to dedicate the same to your Highnesses, Graces, Honours and Worships, &c., as special favourers, protectors, and defenders of the Doctrines which God, through Luther, hath cleared again, to the end that by diligent reading therein, you may be president, and give good examples to others, to your subjects, citizens, &c., diligently to love, to read, to affect the same, and to make good use thereof, as being fragments that fell from Luther's Table, and therewith may help to still, to slake, and to satisfy the spiritual hunger and thirst of the soul. For these most profitable

Discourses of Luther, containing such high spiritual things, we should in nowise suffer to be lost, but worthily esteem thereof, whereout all manner of learning, joy, and comfort may be had and received.

DR. AURIFABER, in his Preface  
to the Book.

*Given at Eisleben, July 7th, 1569.*



# CAPTAIN HENRY BELL'S NARRATIVE:

OR,

RELATION OF THE MIRACULOUS PRESERVING OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER'S BOOK, ENTITLED "COLLOQUIA MENSALIA," OR, "HIS DIVINE DISCOURSES AT HIS TABLE," HELD WITH DIVERS LEARNED MEN AND PIOUS DIVINES; SUCH AS WERE PHILIP MELANCHTHON, CASPARUS CRUCIGER, JUSTUS JONAS, PAULUS EBERUS, VITUS DIETERICUS, JOANNES BUGENHAGEN, JOANNES FORSTERUS, AND OTHERS:

CONTAINING

*Divers Discourses touching Religion, and other Main Points of Doctrine; as also many notable Histories, and all sorts of Learning, Comforts, Advices, Prophecies, Admonitions, Directions, and Instructions; and how the same Book was, by God's Providence, discovered lying under the Ground, where it had lain hid Fifty-two Years; and was a few years since sent over to the said Captain Henry Bell, and by him translated out of the High German into the English Tongue.*

"I, CAPTAIN HENRY BELL, do hereby declare, both to the present age, and also to posterity, that being employed beyond the seas in state affairs divers

years together, both by King James, and also by the late King Charles, in Germany, I did hear and understand, in all places, great bewailing and lamentation made, by reason of the destroying and burning of above fourscore thousand of Martin Luther's books, entitled *His Last Divine Discourses*.

“ For after such time as God stirred up the spirit of Martin Luther to detect the corruptions and abuses of Popery, and to preach Christ, and clearly to set forth the simplicity of the Gospel, many Kings, Princes, and States, Imperial Cities, and Hans-Towns fell from the Popish Religion, and became Protestants, as their posterities still are, and remain to this very day.

“ And for the further advancement of the great work of Reformation then begun, the aforesaid Princes and the rest did then order that the said Divine Discourses of Luther should forthwith be printed ; and that every parish should have and receive one of the aforesaid printed books into every Church throughout all their principalities and dominions, to be chained up, for the common people to read therein.

“ Upon which divine work, or Discourses, the Reformation, begun before in Germany, was wonderfully promoted and increased, and spread both here in England and other countries besides.

“ But afterwards it so fell out that the Pope then living, viz. Gregory XIII., understanding what great hurt and prejudice he and his Popish religion had already received, by reason of the said Luther's Divine Discourses, and also fearing that the same might bring further contempt and mischief upon himself and upon the Popish Church, he therefore, to prevent the same, did fiercely stir up and instigate the Emperor then in being, viz. Rudolphus II., to make an Edict throughout the whole Empire, that all the aforesaid printed books should be burned ; and also that it should be death for any person to have or keep a copy thereof, but also to burn the same : which Edict was speedily put in execution accordingly, insomuch that not one of all the said printed books, nor so much as any one copy of the same, could be found out nor heard of in any place.

“ Yet it pleased God that, anno 1626, a German

gentleman, named Casparus Van Sparr, with whom, in the time of my staying in Germany about King James's business, I became very familiarly known and acquainted, having occasion to build upon the old foundation of a house, wherein his grandfather dwelt at that time when the said Edict was published in Germany for the burning of the aforesaid books ; and digging deep into the ground, under the said old foundation, one of the said original books was there happily found, lying in a deep obscure hole, being wrapped in a strong linen cloth, which was waxed all over with beeswax, within and without ; whereby the book was preserved fair, without any blemish.

“ And at the same time Ferdinandus II. being Emperor in Germany, who was a severe enemy and persecutor of the Protestant religion, the aforesaid gentleman and grandchild to him that had hidden the said books in that obscure hole, fearing that if the said Emperor should get knowledge that one of the said books was yet forthcoming, and in his custody, whereby not only himself might be brought into trouble, but also the book-

in danger to be destroyed, as all the rest were so long before; and also calling me to mind, and knowing that I had the High Dutch Tongue very perfect, did send the said original book over hither into England unto me; and therewith did write unto me a letter, wherein he related the passages of the preserving and finding out the said book.

“ And also he earnestly moved me in his letter, that for the advancement of God’s glory, and of Christ’s Church, I would take the pains to translate the said book, to the end that that most excellent divine work of Luther might be brought again to light.

“ Whereupon I took the said book before me, and many times began to translate the same, but always I was hindered therein, being called upon about other business, insomuch that by no possible means I could remain by that work. Then, about six weeks after I had received the said book, it fell out that I being in bed with my wife one night, between twelve and one of the clock, she being asleep, but myself yet awake, there appeared unto me an ancient man, standing at my bedside,

arrayed all in white, having a long and broad white beard hanging down to his girdle-stead, who, taking me by my right ear, spake these words following unto me:—‘Sirrah ! will not you take time to translate that book which is sent unto you out of Germany ? I will shortly provide for you both place and time to do it ;’ and then he vanished away out of my sight.

“Whereupon, being much thereby affrighted, I fell into an extreme sweat, insomuch that my wife awaking, and finding me all over wet, she asked me what I ailed. I told her what I had seen and heard ; but I never did heed nor regard visions nor dreams ; and so the same fell soon out of my mind.

“Then about a fortnight after I had seen that vision, on a Sunday, I went to Whitehall to hear the sermon, after which ended I returned to my lodging, which was then in King Street, at Westminster, and sitting down to dinner with my wife, two Messengers were sent from the whole Council-board, with a warrant to carry me to the keeper of the Gatehouse, Westminster, there to be safely

kept until further order from the Lords of the Council, which was done without showing me any cause\* at all wherefore I was committed. Upon which said warrant I was kept there ten whole years close prisoner, where I spent five years thereof about the translating of the said book ; insomuch as I found the words very true which the old man, in the aforesaid vision, did say unto me : 'I will shortly provide for you both place and time to translate it.'

"Then, after I had finished the said translation in the prison, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Laud, understanding that I had translated such a book, called *Martin Luther's Divine Discourses*, sent unto me his chaplain, Dr. Bray, into the prison, with this Message following :—

" 'Captain BELL,

" ' My Lord Grace of Canterbury hath sent me unto you, to tell you that his Grace hath

\* Whatsoever was pretended, yet the true cause of the Captain's commitment was because he was urgent with the Lord Treasurer for his Arrears ; which, amounting to a great sum, he was not willing to pay ; and to be freed from his clamours he clapped him up into prison.

understood that you have translated a book of Luther's, touching which book his Grace, many years before, did hear of the burning of so many thousands in Germany by the then Emperor. His Grace therefore doth desire you, that you would send unto him the said original book in Dutch, and also your translation ; which, after his Grace hath perused, shall be returned safely unto you.'

" Whereupon I told Dr. Bray that I had taken a great deal of pains in translating the said book, and was very loth to part with it out of my hands, and therefore I desired him to excuse me to his Grace, that I could not part from it ; with which answer he at that time returned again to his master.

" But the next day after he sent him unto me again, and bade him tell me that, upon his honour, the book should be as safe in his custody, if not safer than in mine own ; for he would lock it up in his own cabinet, to the end no man might come unto it, but only himself. Thereupon I, knowing it would be a thing bootless for me to refuse the sending of them, by reason he was then of such

great power that he would have them, *nolens volens*, I sent them both unto him. Then, after he had kept them in his custody two months, and had daily read therein, he sent the said Doctor unto me, to tell me that I had performed a work worthy of eternal memory, and that he had never read a more excellent divine work ; yet saying that some things therein were fitting to be left out ; and desired me not to think long that he did not return them unto me so soon again. The reason was because that the more he did read therein, the more desire he had to go on therewith ; and so, presenting me with ten livres in gold, he returned back again.

“ After which, when he had them in his custody one whole year, and that I understood he had perused it all over, then I sent unto his Grace, and humbly desired that his Grace would be pleased to return me my books again. Whereupon he sent me word by the said Dr. Bray, that he had not as yet perused them so thoroughly over as he desired to do ; then I stayed yet a year longer before I sent to him again.

“In which time I heard for certain that it was concluded by the King and Council that a Parliament should forthwith be called ; at which news I did much rejoice. And then I sent unto his Grace an humble petition, and therein desired the returning of my book again ; otherwise I told him I should be enforced to make it known, and to complain of him to the Parliament, which was then coming on. Whereupon he sent unto me again safely both the said original book and my translation, and caused his Chaplain, the said Doctor, to tell me that he would make it known unto his Majesty what an excellent piece of work I had translated, and that he would procure an order from his Majesty to have the said translation printed, and to be dispersed throughout the whole kingdom, as it was in Germany, and as he had heard thereof ; and thereupon he presented me again with forty livres in gold.

“And presently after I was set at liberty by warrant from the whole House of Lords, according to his Majesty’s direction in that behalf ; but shortly afterwards the Archbishop fell into his

troubles, and was by the Parliament sent unto the Tower, and afterwards beheaded ; insomuch that I could never since hear anything touching the printing of my book.

“ The House of Commons having then notice that I had translated the aforesaid book, they sent for me, and did appoint a Committee to see it and the translation, and diligently to make inquiry whether the translation did agree with the original or no ; whereupon they desired me to bring the same before them, sitting then in the Treasury Chamber. And Sir Edward Dering, being Chairman, said unto me that he was acquainted with a learned minister beneficed in Essex, who had lived long in England, but was born in High Germany, in the Palatinate, named Mr. Paul Amiraut, whom the Committee sending for, desired him to take both the original and my translation into his custody, and diligently to compare them together, and to make report unto the said Committee whether he found that I had rightly and truly translated it according to the original : which report he made accordingly, and they, being satisfied therein,

referred it to two of the Assembly, Mr. Charles Herle and Mr. Edward Corbet, desiring them diligently to peruse the same, and to make report unto them if they thought it fitting to be printed and published.

“ Whereupon they made report, dated the 10th of November, 1646, that they found it to be an excellent Divine Work, worthy the light and publishing, especially in regard that Luther, in the said Discourses, did revoke his opinion, which he formerly held, touching Consubstantiation in the Sacrament. Whereupon the House of Commons, the 24th of February, 1646, did give order for the printing thereof.

“ Thus, having been lately desired to set down in writing the relation of the passages above-said concerning the said book, as well for the satisfaction of judicious and godly Christians, as for the conservation of the perpetual memory of God’s extraordinary providence in the miraculous preservation of the aforesaid Divine Discourses, and now bringing them again to light: I have done the same according to the plain truth thereof, not

doubting but they will prove a notable advantage of God's glory, and the good and edification of the whole Church, and an unspeakable consolation of every particular member of the same.

“ Given under my hand the 3rd day of July, 1650.

“ HENRY BELL.”

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A COPY OF THE ORDER FROM THE  
HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*24th February, 1646.*

WHEREAS Captain Henry Bell hath strangely discovered and found a Book of Martin Luther's, called his Divine Discourses, which was for a long time very marvellously preserved in Germany : the which book the said Henry Bell, at his great costs and pains, hath translated into the English out of the German Tongue, which Translation and substance thereof is approved by Reverend Divines of the Assembly, as appears by a Certificate under their hands :

It is Ordered and Ordained by the Lords and

Commons assembled in Parliament, that the said Henry Bell shall have the sole disposal and benefit of Printing the said Book translated into English by him as aforesaid, for the space of fourteen years, to commence from the date hereof. And that none do Print or Re-print the same but such as shall be licensed by the said Captain by Authority under his hand.

HENRY ELSYNG.

(Vera Copia.)

# LUTHER'S TABLE-TALK.

---

## OF GOD'S WORD.

*Of the Word of God ; or the Holy Scriptures  
contained in the Bible.*

THE Bible, or Holy Scripture, said Luther, is like a fair and spacious orchard, wherein all sorts of trees do grow, from which we may pluck divers kinds of fruits ; for in the Bible we have rich and precious comforts, learnings, admonitions, warnings, promises, and threatenings, &c. There is not a tree in this orchard on which I have not knocked, and have shaken at least a couple of apples or pears from the same.

*Proofs that the Bible is the Word of God.*

That the Bible is the Word of God, said Luther, the same I prove as followeth. All things that have been and now are in the world, also how it now goeth and standeth in the world, the same was

written altogether particularly at the beginning, in the First Book of Moses concerning the Creation. And even as God made and created it, even so it was, even so it is, and even so doth it stand to this present day. And although King Alexander the Great, the kingdom of Egypt, the empire of Babel, the Persian, Grecian, and Roman Monarchs, the Emperors Julius and Augustus, most fiercely did rage and swell against this Book, utterly to suppress and destroy the same, yet notwithstanding they could prevail nothing ; they are all gone and vanished ; but this Book, from time to time, hath remained, and will remain unremoved, in full and ample manner, as it was written at the first. But who kept and preserved it from such great and raging power ; or, Who defendeth it still ? Truly, said Luther, no human creature, but only and alone God himself, who is the right Master thereof ; and it is a great wonder that it hath been so long kept and preserved, for the devil and the world are great enemies unto it. The devil doubtless hath destroyed many good books in the Church, as he hath rooted out and slain many saints,

concerning whom we have now no knowledge. But, no thanks unto him, the Bible he was fain to leave unmeddled with. In like manner Baptism, the Sacrament, and the Office of Preaching have remained among us against the power of many tyrants and heretics that have opposed the same. These our Lord God hath kept and maintained by his special strength. Homer, Virgil, and such-like are profitable and ancient books ; but, in comparison of the Bible, they are nothing to be regarded.

11

*By whom and at what Times the Bible was  
translated.*

Two hundred and forty-one years before the humanity of Christ, the Five Books of Moses, and the Prophets, were translated out of the Hebrew into the Greek tongue by the Septuagint Interpreters, the seventy doctors or learned men then at Jerusalem, in the time of Eleazar the High-priest, at the request of Ptolemeus Philadelphus, King of Egypt, which King allowed great charges and expenses for the translating of the same.

Then, one hundred and twenty-four years after the birth of Christ, his death and passion, the Old Testament was translated out of Hebrew into Greek by a Jew, named Aquila (being converted to the Christian faith), in the time of Hadrian the Emperor.

Fifty and three years after this Aquila, the Bible was also translated by Theodosius.

In the three-and-thirtieth year after Theodosius, it was translated by Symmachus, under the Emperor Severus.

Eight years after Symmachus, the Bible was also translated by one whose name is unknown, and the same is called the Fifth Translation.

Afterwards the Bible was translated by Hieronymus (who first amended and corrected the Seventy Interpreters) out of Hebrew into the Latin tongue, which translation we use to this day in the Church. And truly, said Luther, he did enough for one man. *Nulla enim privata persona tantum efficere potuisset.* But he had not done amiss if he had taken one or two learned men to his translation besides himself, for then the Holy Ghost would

more powerfully have been discerned, according to Christ's saying, "Where two or three be gathered together in my name, there will I be in the midst of them." And, indeed, said Luther, translators or interpreters ought not to be alone, for good and apt words do not always fall to one single man. And so long as the Bible was in the Church of the Gentiles, it was never yet in such perfection, that it could have been read so exactly and significantly without stop, as we have prepared the same here at Wittemberg, and, God be praised, have translated it out of Hebrew into the High German tongue.

*Of the Differences between the Bible and other Books.*

The Holy Scripture, or the Bible, said Luther, is full of divine gifts and virtues. The books of the Heathen taught nothing of Faith, Hope, and Love ; nay, they knew nothing at all of the same ; their books aimed only at that which was present, at that which, with natural wit and understanding, a human creature was able to comprehend and

take hold of ; but to trust in God and hope in the Lord, nothing was written thereof in their books. In the Psalms and in Job we may see and find how those two books do treat and handle of Faith, of Hope, of Patience, and Prayer.

To be short, the Holy Scripture, said Luther, is the best and highest book of God, full of comfort in all manner of trials and temptations ; for it teacheth of Faith, Hope, and Love far otherwise than by human reason and understanding can be comprehended. And in times of troubles and vexations, it teacheth how these virtues should light and shine ; it teacheth, also, that after this poor and miserable life there is another which is eternal and everlasting.

*What we ought chiefly to seek for in the Bible, and how we ought to study and learn the Holy Scriptures.*

The chief lesson and study in Divinity, said Luther, is well and rightly to learn to know Christ, for he is therein very friendly and familiarly pictured unto us. From hence St. Peter saith, "Grow

up in the knowledge of Christ ; " and Christ himself also teacheth that we should learn to know him only out of the Scriptures, where he saith, " Search the Scriptures, for they do testify of me."

We ought not, said Luther, to measure, censure, and understand the Scriptures according to our own natural sense and reason, but we ought diligently by prayer to meditate therein, and to search after the same. The devil and temptations also do give occasion unto us somewhat to learn and understand the Scriptures by experience and practice. Without trials and temptations we should never understand anything thereof ; no, not although we diligently read and heard the same. The Holy Ghost must be the only master and tutor to teach us therein, and let youth and scholars not be ashamed to learn of this tutor. When I find myself in temptation, then I quickly lay hold and fasten on some text in the Bible which Christ Jesus layeth before me, namely, *that he died for me*, from whence I have and receive comfort.

*That we should diligently read the Texts of the Bible, and stay ourselves upon it as the only true Foundation.*

Whoso layeth a good foundation, and is a substantial Text-man, that is, he that is well grounded in the Text, the same hath whereupon he surely may keep footing, and runneth not lightly into error. And truly, said Luther, the same is most necessary for a Divine; for with the texts and grounds of the Holy Scriptures I dazzled, astonished, and overcame all my adversaries; for they approach dreamingly and lazily; they teach and write according to their natural sense, reason, and understanding, and they think the Holy Scripture is a slight and a simple thing; like the Pharisee, who thought a business soon done when our Saviour Christ said unto him, “Do that, and thou shalt live.” The sectaries and seducing spirits understand nothing in the Scriptures; but with their fickle, inconstant, and uncertain books which they have devised, they run themselves into error.

Whoso is armed with the Text, the same is a

right pastor ; and my best advice and counsel is, said Luther, that we draw water out of the true fountain, that is, diligently to read in the Bible. He is a learned Divine that is well grounded in the Text ; for one text and sentence out of the Bible is of far more esteem and value than many writings and glosses, which neither are strong, sound, nor armour of proof. As when I have that text before me of St. Paul, where he saith, " All the creatures of God are good, if they be received with thanksgiving." This text sheweth that what God hath made is good. Now, eating, drinking, marrying, &c., are of God's making, therefore they are good. But the glosses of the Primitive Fathers are against this text, for St. Bernard, Basil, Dominicus, Hieronymus, and others have written far otherwise of the same. But I prefer the Text before them all, and it is far more to be esteemed of than all their glosses ; yet, notwithstanding, in Pope-dom the glosses of the Fathers were of higher regard than the bright and clear text of the Bible, through which great wrong oftentimes is done to the Holy Scriptures ; for the good Fathers, as

Ambrose, Basil, and Gregory, have ofttimes written very cold things touching the Divine word.

*That the Bible is the Head of all Arts.*

Let us not lose the Bible, said Luther, but with all diligence and in God's fear read and preach the same ; for if that remaineth, flourisheth, and be taught, then all is safe. She is the head and empress of all faculties and arts. If Divinity falleth, then whatsoever remaineth besides is nothing worth.

*Of the Art of the School Divines in the Bible.*

The art of the School Divines, said Luther, with their speculations in the Holy Scriptures, are merely vain and human reasonings, spun out of their own natural wit and understanding, of which I have read much in Bonaventura, but he had almost made me deaf. I fain would have learned and understood out of that book how God and my sinful soul had been reconciled together ; but of that there was nothing to be found therein. They talk much of the union of the will and

understanding, but all is mere phantasy and folly. The right and true speculation is this: "Believe in Christ; do what thou oughtest to do in thy vocation," &c. This is the only practice in Divinity. Also, *Mystica Theologia Dionysii* is a mere fable; and a lie, like to Plato's Fables. *Omnia sunt non ens, et omnia sunt ens*—All is something, and all is nothing; and so he leaveth all hanging in frivolous and idle sort.

True and upright Divinity consisteth in the practice, use, and exercise; her foundation is Christ; she taketh hold by faith on his passion, death, and resurrection. All those, said Luther, that concur not with us, and have not this doctrine before their eyes, the same do feign unto themselves but only a speculated Divinity, according to their carnal sense and reason, and according as they use to censure in temporal causes; for no man can divert them from these opinions, namely, "Whoso doth good works, and liveth an honest and civil kind of life, the same is an upright Christian, and he is well and safe;" but they are therein far deceived; for this is the truth indeed, "Whoso

feareth God and trusteth in him, the same most surely will be well and safe at last."

Therefore, said Luther, these speculating Divines belong directly to the devil in hell. They follow their own opinions, and what with their five senses they are able to comprehend ; and such is also Origen's divinity. But David is of another mind ; he acknowledgeth his sins, and saith, "*Miserere mei Domini,*" God be merciful to me a sinner. At the hands of these sophisticated Divines, God can scarcely obtain that he is God alone ; much less can he find this favour of them, that they should allow only him to be good and just ; nay, very hardly will they yield that he is an immortal God.

### *The Depths of the Bible.*

The wise of the world, and the great ones, said Luther, understand not God's Word ; but God hath revealed it to the poor contemned simple people, as our Saviour Christ witnesseth, where he saith, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto

babes," &c. ; from whence St. Gregory says well and rightly, that the Holy Scripture is like a water, wherein an "elephant swimmeth, but a little sheep goeth therein upon his feet."

I remember a Fable, said Luther, which fitteth very well for these times, and for this purpose, dis-coursed of before. A Lion, said he, making a great feast, invited all the beasts thereunto, and with them also he invited swine. Now, as all manner and sorts of dainties were brought and set before the guests, the swine demanded if Brewer's grains might be had for them Even so in these days it is with our Epicures ; we Preachers bring and set before them in the Church the most dainty and costly dishes, as Everlasting Salvation, Remission of Sins, and God's Grace ; but they, like swine, cast up their snouts, and root after Dollars, Crowns, and Ducats ; and, indeed, said Luther, "what should a cow do with nutmegs ?" She would rather content herself with oat-straw.

When we have God's Word pure and clear, then we are secure, we are negligent and regard it not, we think it will always so remain ; we do not

watch and pray against the devil, who is ready to tear the Word out of our hearts. It goeth with us as with travellers, who, so long as they are on the right way, are secure and careless ; but when they go astray into woods or by-ways, then they are careful which way to take, whether this or that way be the right : even so are we secure by the pure doctrine of the Gospel ; we are sleepy and negligent ; we stand not in God's fear, nor defend ourselves with prayer against the devil. But those that entertain errors are highly busied, yea, they are very careful and diligent how to keep and maintain the same.

*Of the future Want of upright and true Preachers  
of God's Word.*

In a short time, said Luther, will be such want of upright Preachers and Ministers, that people would be glad to scratch out of the earth these good and godly Teachers now living, if they might but get them ; then they will see what they have done in molesting and contemning the Preachers and Ministers of God's Word. Of Physicians and

Lawyers there are enough, if not too many, to serve the world ; but a country hath need of two hundred Ministers where one Lawyer is sufficient. My most gracious Lord, said Luther, the Prince Elector of Saxony, hath enough of twenty Lawyers in all his territories, but he must have near six thousand Preachers and Ministers.

*That People, out of mere Wilfulness, do set themselves against God's Word.*

Had I known, said Luther, when I first began to write, what I now see and find, namely, that people had been such enemies to God's Word, and so fiercely had set themselves against the same, truly I had held my peace ; for I never should have been so courageous as to have fallen upon the Pope, and to have angered him, and almost the whole Christian world with him. I thought at first that people had sinned ignorantly, and out of human weakness, and not of set purpose and wittingly to endeavour to suppress God's Word ; but it pleased God to lead me on in the mouth of the cannon, like a bar-horse that hath his eyes blinded,

and seeth not who runneth upon him. Even so was I, as it were, tugged by my hair to the office of preaching ; but had I then known what now I know, ten horses should scarce have drawn me to it. Moses and Jeremiah also complained that they were deceived.

*Of the Archbishop of Mentz, one of the Spiritual Princes Electors, his Censure of the Bible.*

Anno 1530, at the Imperial Assembly at Augsburg, Albertus, Bishop of Mentz, by chance had got into his hands the Bible, and for the space of four hours he continued reading therein ; at last, one of his Council on a sudden came into his bed-chamber unto him, who, seeing the Bible in the Bishop's hand, was much amazed thereat, and said unto him, "What doth your Highness with that book ?" The Archbishop thereupon answered him, and said, "I know not what this book is, but sure I am, all that is written therein is quite against us."

*That the Bible is hated of the Worldly-wise and  
of the Sophists.*

Doctor Ussinger, an Austin Friar, with me in the Monastery at Erfurt, said once unto me, as he saw that I diligently read and affected the Bible, "Brother Martin, what is the Bible? Let us," said he, "read the ancient Teachers and Fathers, for they have sucked the juice and truth out of the Bible. The Bible is the cause of all dissension and rebellion."

This, said Luther, is the censure of the world concerning God's Word; therefore we must let them run on their course towards that place which is prepared for them.

*Of the Errors which the Sectaries do hold concerning  
the Word of God.*

Bullinger said once in my hearing, said Luther, that he was earnest against the sectaries, as contemners of God's Word, and also against those who attributed too much to the literal Word; for, said he, such do sin against God and his

almighty power, as the Jews did in naming the ark "God." But, said he, whoso holdeth a mean between both, the same is taught what is the right use of the Word and Sacraments.

Whereupon, said Luther, I answered him and said, "Bullinger, you err: you know neither yourself nor what you hold; I mark well your tricks and fallacies. Zuinglius and *Œcolampadius* likewise proceeded too far in this your ungodly meaning; but when *Brentius* withstood them, they then lessened their opinions, alleging they did not reject the literal Word, but only condemned certain gross abuses. By this your error," said Luther to Bullinger, "you cut in sunder and separate the Word and the Spirit; you separate those that preach and teach the Word from God who worketh the same; you also separate thereby the Ministers that baptize from God who commandeth it; and you think that the Holy Ghost is given and worketh without the Word; which Word, you say, is an external sign and mark that findeth the Spirit, which already and before possesseth the heart. Insomuch, according to your falsities, that if the Word findeth

not the Spirit, but an ungodly person, then it is not God's Word ; whereby you define and hold the Word, not according to God who speaketh it, but according as people do entertain and receive it. You will only grant that such is God's Word which purifieth and bringeth peace and life ; but seeing it worketh not in the ungodly, therefore it is not God's Word. You teach that the outward Word is like an object or a picture, which signifieth and presenteth something ; you measure the use thereof only according to the matter, like as a human creature speaketh for himself ; you will not yield that God's Word is an instrument through which the Holy Ghost worketh and accomplisheth his work, and prepareth a beginning to righteousness or justification. In these errors are you drowned, so that you neither see nor understand yourselves.

“A man might vex himself to death against the devil, who, in the Papists, is such an enemy to God's Word. The devil seeth and feeleth that the external Word and preaching in the Church doth him great prejudice, therefore he rageth and worketh these errors against the same ; but I hope

God ere long will look into it, and will strike down the devil with these seducers.

“A true Christian,” said Luther, “must hold for certain, and must say, That Word which is delivered and preached to the wicked, to the dissemblers, and to the ungodly, is even as well God’s Word as that which is preached to the good and godly upright Christians. As also, the true Christian Church is among sinners, where good and bad are mingled together. And that Word, whether it produceth fruit or not, is nevertheless God’s strength, which saveth all that believe thereon. And again, it will also judge the ungodly, as St. John saith in chap. v., otherwise they might plead a good excuse before God, that they neither ought to be nor could be condemned; for then they might truly allege that they have not had God’s Word, and so consequently could not receive the same. But,” said Luther, “I say, teach and acknowledge that the Preacher’s words, his absolutions, and the sacraments, are not his words nor works, but they are God’s words, works, cleansing, absolving, binding, &c.; we are but only the

instruments, fellow-workers, or God's assistants, through whom God worketh and finisheth his work. "We," said Luther to Bullinger, "will not endure these your metaphysical and philosophical distinctions and differences, which merely are spun and hammered out of human and natural sense and reason. You say, It is a man that preacheth, that reproveth, that absolveth, comforteth, &c., and that the Holy Ghost worketh; you say, likewise, the Minister baptiseth, absolveth, and administereth the sacraments, but it is God that cleanseth the hearts, and forgiveth sins, &c. Oh, no," said Luther, "but I conclude thus: God himself preacheth, threateneth, reproveth, affrighteth, comforteth, absolveth, administereth the sacraments, &c. As our Saviour Christ saith, 'Whoso heareth you, heareth me; and what ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,' &c. Likewise, 'It is not you that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.' "

"I am sure and certain," said Luther, "when I go up to the pulpit, or to the cathedral, to preach or read, that it is not my word which I speak, but

my tongue is the pen of a ready writer, as the Psalmist saith. God speaketh in the Prophets and men of God, as St. Peter in his Epistle saith : 'The holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' Therefore we must not separate nor part God and man according to our natural reason and understanding. In like manner, every hearer must conclude and say, I hear not St. Paul, St. Peter, or a man speak; but I hear God himself speak, baptize, absolve, excommunicate, and administer the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper, &c."

Bullinger, attentively hearkening to this discourse of that holy man, Luther, fell down flat on his face to the ground, and uttered these words following : "Oh, happy be the time that brought me hither to hear the divine discourse of this man of God" (Martin Luther), "a chosen vessel of the Lord to declare his truth! And now I abjure and utterly renounce these my former errors, finding them convinced and beaten down through God's infallible Word, which out of his divine mouth" (Martin Luther), "hath touched my heart, and won

me to his glory." After he had uttered these words lying on the ground, he arose and clasped his arms about Luther's neck, both of them shedding joyful tears.

Ah, God ! said Luther at that time, what an unspeakable comfort a poor, weak, and sorrowful conscience might have and receive, if it could but believe that such words and comforts were the words and comforts of God himself, as in truth they are ; therefore we conclude, short and round, that God through the Word worketh, which is an instrument whereby we are instructed to know him in heart, as by this present and happy example of the conversion of this our loving brother, Bullinger, we apparently see and find.

But whereas, said Luther, the Word produceth not fruit everywhere alike, but worketh severally, the same is God's judgment, and his secret will, which from us is hid ; we ought not to desire to know it. For "the wind bloweth where it listeth," as Christ saith ; we must not grabble nor search after the same.

If, said Luther, I were addicted to God's Word

at all times alike, and always had such love and desire thereunto as sometimes I have, then should I account myself the most blessed man on earth. But the loving Apostle St. Paul failed also thereof, as he complains with sighs of heart, saying, “I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind,” &c. Should the Word be false because it bringeth not always fruit? Truly this art of determining and knowing the Word hath been in great danger from the beginning of the world, and hath endured much: few people there are that can hit it, except God, through his Holy Spirit, teacheth it them in their hearts. The Sectaries understand not the strength of God’s Word. I do wonder, said Luther, that they do write and teach so much of God’s Word, seeing they so little regard the same.

Ferdinand, Prince Elector of Saxony, used to say he had well discerned that nothing could be propounded by human reason and understanding, were it never so wise, cunning, or sharp, but that a man, even out of the self-same proposition, might be able to confute and overthrow it; but God’s Word only

stood fast and sure, like a mighty wall which neither can be battered nor beaten down.

*Which are the best Preachers and the best Hearers.*

I, said Luther, esteem those to be the best Preachers which teach the common people and youth most plainly and simply, without subtlety, screwed words, or enlargements. Christ taught the people by plain and simple parables. In like manner, those are the best Hearers that willingly do hear and believe God's Word simply and plainly, and although they be weak in faith, yet so long as they doubt not of the doctrine they are to be holpen forward ; for God can and will bear with weakness if it be but acknowledged, and that we creep again to the Cross and pray to God for grace, and amend ourselves.

David saith, "I hate them that imagine evil things, but thy law do I love," and will show therewith that we ought diligently to regard the strength of the Word of God, and not to contemn it, as the enthusiasts do, for God will deal with us by such

means, and by the same will also work in us. Therefore the ancient Fathers say well touching this point, namely, that we ought not to look to the person baptizing or ministering the Sacrament, but we must look to God's Word.

Our Lord God electeth from hearts, to whom he revealeth his Word, and therewithal he giveth them mouths to speak it; preserveth and maintaineth it, not by sword, but through his Divine Power.

*That we ought to direct all our Actions and Lives according to God's Word.*

God, said Luther, hath his measuring-lines, and his canons, which are called the Ten Commandments; they are written in our flesh and blood. The contents of them is: "What thou wouldest have done to thyself, the same thou oughtest also to do to another." For God presseth upon that point, and saith, "Such measure as thou metest, the same shall be measured to thee again." With this measuring-line, or measure, hath God marked the whole world. They that live and do thereafter,

well it is with them, for God doth richly reward them in this life ; and a Turk or a Heathen may as well be partaker of such rewards as a Christian.

*Where God's Word is loved, there dwelleth God.*

Upon these words of Christ, “If a man loveth me, he will keep my Word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him,” I say thus, said Luther: Heaven and earth, the castles and palaces of all Emperors, Kings, and Princes, are no way sufficient to make a dwelling-place for God ; yet, in a silly human creature that keepeth his Word he will dwell. Isaiah calleth heaven his “seat,” and earth his “footstool,” but not his dwelling; therefore, when we long to seek after God, we shall be sure to find him with them that hear and keep his Word, as Christ saith, “He that keepeth my Word, I will come and dwell with him.”

A man could not speak more simply and childishly than Christ spake, and yet he confounded therewith all the wisdom of the worldly-wise. To speak in such a manner, said Luther, is not *in*

*sublimi, sed humili genere*: if I should teach a child, I would teach him in this sort: “He that loves me, will keep my Word.” Here we see that Christ saith not, Abstain from flesh, from marrying, from housekeeping, &c., as the Papists teach, for that were even to invite the devil and all his fellows to a feast.

*That true and upright Christians are ready to suffer Death and all manner of Torments for the Gospel's sake, but Hypocrites do shun the Cross.*

Not long since, said Luther, I invited to my table, at Wittemberg, an Hungarian Divine, named Matthias de Vai, who told me that, as he came first to be a Preacher in Hungary, he chanced to fall out with a Papistical Priest. Now, he was complained of by that Priest to a Friar that was brother to the Vaivoda, or Governor of Buda, and they were both summoned to appear before him. The one much accusing the other, insomuch that the Friar could not reconcile nor take up the controversy between them, at last, and after long debate, the Friar said, “I know a way soon to

discover the truth of this cause," and commanded that two barrels of gunpowder should be set in the midst of the market-place at Buda, and said unto the parties, "He that will maintain his Doctrine to be right, and the true Word of God, let him sit upon one of these barrels, and I will give fire unto it, and he that remaineth living and unburned, his Doctrine is right." Then Matthias de Vai leaped presently upon one of the barrels and sat himself down thereon ; but the Papist Priest would not up to the other barrel, but slunk away. Then the Friar said, "Now I see and know that the Faith and Doctrine of Matthias de Vai is the right, and that our Papistical Religion is false." And thereupon he punished and fined the Papist, with his assistants, for wronging De Vai, in four thousand Hungarian ducats, and compelled him for a certain time to maintain one hundred soldiers at his own charge ; but he licensed Matthias de Vai openly to preach the Gospel. The Friar himself, recanting his religion, was converted and became a Protestant ; whereupon Luther said, Never yet would any Papist burn for religion, but our people go

with joy to the fire, as heretofore hath been well seen on the holy Martyrs.

*By what God preserveth his Word.*

God will keep his Word, said Luther, through the writing-pen upon earth ; the Divines are the heads or quills of the pens, but the Lawyers are the stumps. If, now, the world will not keep the heads and quills—that is, if they will not hear the Divines—then they must keep the stumps—that is, they must hear the Lawyers, who will teach them manners.

*That in Causes of Religion we must not judge according to human Wisdom, but according to God's Word.*

When the Pope and Emperor, said Luther, cited me to appear at Worms, Anno Domini 1521, at the Imperial Assembly, they pressed and earnestly advised me to refer the determining of my cause to his Imperial Majesty ; but I answered the three spiritual Electors, Maintz, Tryer, and Cologne, and said, “ I will rather surrender up to his Majesty his

letters of safe-conduct which he hath given me than to put this cause to the determining of any human creature whatsoever." Whereupon my master, the Prince Elector of Saxony, said also unto them, "Truly no man could offer more." But as they still insisted and urged me touching that point, I said, I did not dare to presume, without great danger of running myself into God's wrath, and of the loss of my soul's health, to refer this Cause, which is none of mine, but God's Cause, to the censure of earthly counsel ; for the same, before all ages, hath been had in consultation, hath been determined, censured, concluded, and confirmed by the great Council in Heaven, to be and remain the infallible, most certain and true Word of the High Majesty of God ; and therefore altogether needless, yea, most presumptuous now it were, either to receive or to deliver it to the determination and censure of human and natural sense, wit, and wisdom, which is subject to nothing more than to error, especially in and concerning God's Word and divine matters. And I told them flat and plain, I would rather expose myself to endure all the

torments that this world, flesh, and the devil were able to devise and prepare than to give my consent thereunto.

*That in former Times it was dangerous studying  
the Holy Scriptures.*

In times past, as also in part of our time, said Luther, it was dangerous studying, when divinity and all good arts were contemned ; and when fine, expert, and prompt wits were plagued with sophistry. Aristotle, the Heathen, was held in such repute and honour, that whoso undervalued or contradicted him was held, at Cologne, for the greatest heretic ; whereas they themselves understood not Aristotle. The Sophists did much more darken Aristotle than illustrate him ; like as that Friar did, who wasted two whole hours in a sermon about Christ's Passion, and concerning this question : *Utrum quantitas realiter distincta sit à substantia*—whether the quantity in itself were divided from the substance ? He showed this example, and said, “ My head might well creep through, but the bigness of my head could not ; ”

insomuch that, like an idiot, he divided the head from the bigness thereof. A silly grammarian might easily have solved the same, and said, The bigness of the head, that is, the big or great head.

With such and the like fopperies were petty brains troubled, said Luther, and were instructed neither in good arts nor in divinity. Antipho, Chusa, Bovillus, and others were likewise miserably molested and plagued about bringing a thing which was round into four square, and to compare a straight line with a crooked. But we, God be praised, have now happy times; and it were to be wished that the youth made good use thereof, and spent their studying diligently in such arts as at this time are green, and flourish.

*That the Jews have better Teachers and Writers of the Holy Scriptures than the Gentiles.*

When I read in the Psalter, said Luther, I do much admire that David had such a spirit. Oh, what high enlightened people were among the Jews! This David was a married man; he was a king, a soldier, and a preacher; he was busy in temporal

affairs, yet nevertheless he wrote such an excellent surpassing book. The New Testament was written also by men that were Jews, and the Apostles themselves were Jews: God would signify thereby that we should adore his Word, we should preciously esteem thereof, reverence, and love the same. We Gentiles have no book that ruleth in the Church, therefore we are not comparable to the Jews; from hence it is that St. Paul maketh a very fine distinction or difference between Sarah and Hagar, and the two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. Hagar was also a wife, but nothing near like Sarah; therefore it is a great pride, presumption, and wilfulness of the Pope, in that he, being but a human creature, will presume, without Scripture, to set himself against the Scripture, and will exalt himself above the same.

*Of Luther's Complaint of the Multitude of Books.*

The multitude of books, said Luther, is much to be lamented; no measure nor end is held in writing; every one will write books; some out of ambition to purchase praise thereby, and to raise

them names ; others for the sake of lucre and gain, and by that means further much evil. Therefore the Bible, by so many comments and books, will be buried and obscured, so that the Text will be nothing regarded. I could wish that all my books were buried nine ells deep in the ground, for evil example's sake, in that every one will imitate me with writing many books, thereby to purchase praise. But Christ died not for the sake of our ambition and vain-glory, but he died only to the end that his name might be sanctified.

*That God's Word will not be truly understood  
without Trials and Temptations.*

I, said Luther, did not learn my divinity at one only time, but I was constrained to search deeper and deeper, to which my temptations brought me ; for no man, without trials and temptations, can attain to the true understanding of the Holy Scriptures. St. Paul had a devil that beat him with fists, and with temptations drove him diligently to study the Holy Scripture. I, said Luther, had cleaving and hanging on my neck the Pope, the

Universities, all the deep-learned, and with them the devil himself ; these hunted me into the Bible, where I diligently read, and thereby, God be praised, at length I attained to the true understanding of the same. Without such a devil, we are but only speculators of divinity, and according to our vain reasoning we dream that so-and-so it must be, as the Monks and Friars in monasteries do. The Holy Scripture of itself is certain and true enough ; but God grant me the grace that I may catch hold on the right use thereof ; for when Satan disputeth with me in this sort, namely, whether God be gracious unto me or no? then I must not meet him with this text : “ Whoso loveth God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength, the same shall inherit the kingdom of God ; ” for then the devil presently objecteth, and hitteth me in the teeth, and saith, “ Thou hast not loved God with all thy heart,” &c., which, indeed, is true, and my own conscience therein witnesseth against me ; but at such a time I must arm myself and encounter him with this text, namely : “ That Jesus Christ died for me, and through him I have

a gracious God and Father ; Christ hath made an atonement for me," as St. Paul saith, " He is of God given unto us for wisdom, for righteousness, for holiness, and for redemption."

Tyrants, sectaries, seducers, and heretics do nothing else but drive us into the Bible, to make us read more diligently therein, and with more fervency to sharpen our prayers.

*Of the Advice of the Bishop of Salzburg, how to qualify the Controversy between the Protestants and Papists, propounded to Luther shortly before his Death ; touching which, Luther discoursed as followeth :*

At the Imperial Assembly at Augsburg, in the year 1530, the Bishop of Salzburg said unto me, " Four ways and means there are to make a reconciliation or union between us and you Protestants. One is, that ye yield unto us. To that you say you cannot. The second is, that we yield unto you ; but that we will not do. The third is, that the one party, by force, should be compelled to yield to the other ; but thereupon a great combustion and

tumult might be raised. Therefore the fourth way or means were to be applauded and used, namely, that now being here assembled together, the one party should strive to thrust out the other, and that party which shall have the advantage, and be the stronger, the same should put the other party into a bag and expel them." Whereupon I, said Luther, answered him and said, "This, indeed, were a very substantial course to settle unity and peace, wonderful wisely considered of, found out and expounded by such a holy and Christian-like Bishop as you are." And thereupon I took letters out of my pocket, which shortly before I had received from Rome, and gave the same to the Bishop to read, which letter related a pretty passage that fell out there five weeks before, between some Cardinals and the Pope's Fool, written as followeth:—

The said Cardinals had been in serious consultation how, and by what means, the Protestants in Germany might be convinced touching their error, and suppressed; but they saw the difficulty of it, in that the Protestants, in their books and writings, powerfully against the Papists, cited the sacred

Scripture, and especially they opposed and withstood them with the doctrine of St. Paul, which were great blocks in the Papists' way, insomuch that they found it a business not so easily to be accomplished. Then said the Fool unto the Cardinals, "I know how to give you herein an advice, whereby you easily may be rid and quitted of St. Paul, that his doctrines shall not be approved of; as thus: The Pope," said the Fool, "hath power to make Saints; therefore let St. Paul be taken out of the number of the Apostles, and preferred to be a Saint, as then his *dicta*, or sayings, which are against you, shall no more be held for apostolical." "This and your proposition," said Luther to the Bishop, "are of equal value."

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### OF GOD'S WORKS.

*That human Sense and Reason cannot comprehend nor understand God's Works.*

In all things, and in the least creatures, yea, also in their members, God's almighty power and

great wonderful works do clearly shine. For what man, how powerful, wise, and holy soever, can make out of one fig, a fig-tree or another fig? or, out of one cherry-stone, can make a cherry or a cherry-tree? or what man can know how God createth and preserveth all things and maketh them grow?

And truly we find and see printed the Holy Trinity in all good arts and creatures, as the almighty power of God the Father, the wisdom of God the Son, and the goodness of God the Holy Ghost. Neither can we conceive or know how the apple of the eye doth see, or how understanding words are spoken distinctly and plainly when only the tongue is moved and stirred in the mouth, all which are natural things, as we daily see and act. How then should we be able to comprehend or understand the secret counsel of God's Majesty, or search it out with our sense, wit, reason, or understanding?

*That no Man understands God's Works.*

No man, said Luther, is able to imagine, much less to understand, what God hath done, and still

doth without ceasing. Although we laboured and sweated blood to write but only three lines in such manner as St. John did write, yet were we never able to perform it. What, then, should we any way admire or wonder at our wisdom? I, for my part, said Luther, will be a fool, and will yield myself captive.

When one asked where God was before Heaven was created, St. Austin made answer thereunto and said, He was in himself. And as another, said Luther, asked me the same question, I said, He was building Hell for such idle, presumptuous, fluttering spirits and inquisitors. After he had created all things, he was everywhere, and yet he was nowhere; for I cannot fasten nor take hold of him without the Word. But he will be found there where he hath bound himself to be. The Jews found him at Jerusalem by the Throne of Grace (Exodus xxv.). We find him in the Word and Faith, in Baptism and Sacraments; but in his Majesty he is nowhere to be found.

It was a special grace in the Old Testament, when God bound himself to a certain place where

he would be found, namely, in that place where the Tabernacle was, towards which they prayed ; as first in Shilch and Shechem, afterwards at Gibeon, and lastly at Jerusalem in the Temple.

The Greeks and Heathens in after-times, said Luther, did imitate the same, and did build temples for their idols in certain places, as at Ephesus for Diana, at Delphos for Apollo, &c. For where God built a church, there the devil would also build a chapel. They imitated the Jews also in this, namely, that as the most holy was dark and had no light, even so and after the same manner did they make their places dark where the devil made answer, as at Delphos and elsewhere. In such sort is the devil always God's ape.

But, said Luther, whereas the most holy must be dark, the same did signify that the Kingdom of Christ no other way was to be taken hold of and fastened, but only by the Word and by Faith.

*That the Superfluity of temporal Wealth doth hinder  
the Faith.*

God, said Luther, could be rich soon and easily if he would be more provident, and would deny us the use of his creatures. If he would but keep back the sun, that it should not shine, or lock up the air, detain the water, or quench out the fire—ah ! then would we willingly give all our money and wealth to have the use of his creatures again.

But seeing God so liberally heapeth his gifts upon us, we therefore will claim them as by right, in despite of him, and let him deny them us if he dare. Therefore the unspeakable multitude of his innumerable benefits do hinder and darken the faith of the believers, much more of the ungodly.

*That God doth purchase nothing but Unthankfulness  
with his Benefits.*

God giveth sun and moon, said Luther, stars and elements, fire and water, air and earth, and all creatures ; body and soul, and all manner of maintenance, of fruits, grain, corn, wine, and all that is

profitable for the preserving of this temporal life ; and, moreover, he giveth unto us his all-saving Word, yea, himself he giveth unto us.

But, said Luther, what getteth God thereby ? Truly nothing else than that he is wickedly blasphemed ; yea, that his only Son is pitifully scorned, contemned, and hanged on the gallows ; his servants plagued, banished, persecuted, and slain. This is the thanks that he hath for his Grace, for creating, for redeeming, sanctifying, nourishing, and for preserving us : such a seed, fruit, and godly child is the world. Oh, woe be to it !

*Of God's Power in our Weakness.*

God, said Luther, placeth his highest office very wonderfully ; he commits it to preachers that are poor sinners and beggars, who do utter and teach it, and very weakly do thereafter, or live according to the same.

Thus goeth it always with God's power in our weakness ; for when he is weakest in us, then is he strongest.

*Howsoever God dealeth with us, it is always unacceptable.*

How, said Luther, should God deal with us ? Good days we cannot bear, evil we cannot endure. Giveth he riches unto us ? then are we proud, so that no man can live by us in peace ; nay, we will be carried upon hands and shoulders, and will be adored as gods. Giveth he poverty unto us ? then are we dismayed, we are impatient, and murmur against him. Therefore nothing were better for us than soon to be conveyed to the last dance, and covered with shovels.

*Of the acknowledging of Nature.*

Adam had no need of books, said Luther, for he had the Book of Nature ; and all the Patriarchs and Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, do cite much out of that book ; as, touching the sorrows of women bearing children, of the fellowship and community of the members of man's body, as St. Paul relateth such parables, and saith that one

member cannot miss another : if the eyes did not see, whither then would the feet go ? how would they stumble and fall ? If the hands did not fasten and take hold, how then should we eat ? If the feet went not, where then would the hands get anything ? Only the maw, that lazy drone, lies in the midst of the body, and is fatted like a swine. This parable, said Luther, teacheth us that mankind should love one another ; as also the Greeks' pictures do teach concerning two men, the one lame and the other blind, who showed kindness the one to the other, as much as in them lay. The lame guided the blind in the way, which else he neither knew nor saw, and the blind carried the lame, that else could not go ; so that they both were helped and came forward.

*Of God's Goodness, if we could but trust unto him.*

Once, towards evening, came flying into Luther's garden two birds, and made a nest therein, but they were oftentimes scared away by those that passed by. Then said Luther, O ye loving pretty birds ! fly not away ; I am heartily well-contented

with you, if ye could but trust unto me. Even so it is with us : we neither can trust in God, who, notwithstanding, showeth and wisheth us all goodness.

*That God made all Things for Mankind.*

God's power is great, said Luther, who holdeth and nourisheth the whole world, and maintaineth it ; and it is a hard article where we say and acknowledge, "I believe in God the Father." He hath created all things sufficiently for us. All the seas are our cellars, all woods are our huntin<sup>gs</sup> ; the earth is full of silver and gold, and of innumerable fruits, which are created all for our sakes, and the earth is a corn-house and a larder for us, &c.

*That God's creatures are used, or rather abused, for the most part by the Ungodly.*

The wicked and ungodly, said Luther, do enjoy and use the most part of God's creatures ; for the tyrants have the greatest power, lands, and people in the world ; the usurers have the money ; the

farmers have eggs, butter, corn, barley, oats, apples, pears, &c. ; but good and godly Christians must suffer, be persecuted, must sit in dungeons where they can see neither sun nor moon, must be thrust out into poverty, must be banished, and plagued, &c. But certainly it must be better one day ; it cannot always so remain ; let us have but patience, and steadfastly remain by the pure doctrine, and, notwithstanding all this misery, let us not fall away from the same.

*That God, and not Money, preserves the World.*

God only, said Luther, and not money and wealth, maintains and preserves the world ; for riches and much money do make proud and lazy people : as at Venice, where the richest people are, a horrible dearth fell among them in our memory, so that they were driven to call upon the Turks for help, who sent twenty-four galleys laden with corn, all which, as they almost were arrived, went down into the sea and sank before their eyes.

Therefore, said Luther, great wealth and money cannot still the hunger, but rather occasioneth more

dearth ; for where rich people are, there it is always dear, and things are at high rates. Moreover, money maketh no man right merry, but much more pensive and full of sorrow ; for they are thorns which do prick people, as Christ calls riches ; yet is the world so mad that they will set thereupon all their joy and felicity.

*That God's corporeal Gifts are but little regarded.*

One evening, Luther saw cattle going in the fields, in a pasture, and said : Behold, there go our preachers, our milk-bearers, butter-bearers, cheese and wool-bearers, which do daily preach unto us the faith towards God, that we should trust in him, as in our loving Father ; he careth for us, and will maintain and nourish us.

*That God nourisheth all the Beasts.*

No man, said Luther, can account the great charges which God is at only in maintaining the birds and such creatures, which in a manner are nothing or little worth. I am persuaded, said he, that it costeth God yearly more to maintain only

the sparrows than the yearly revenue of the French King amounteth unto. What then shall we say of all the rest of his creatures ?

*That God is skilful in all Manner of Trades.*

God, said Luther, is skilful in all occupations and trades, in a most perfect and excellent manner ; for, like a skilful tailor, he makes such a coat for the stag, which he wears nine hundred years together, and of itself it is not torn ; also, like a good shoemaker, he gives him shoes on his feet, that last longer than the stag himself, &c.

God gives this world, with all his works, to those people who, as he knows before, will anger, contemn, and blaspheme him. What, then, may we think, will he give to those that through faith are justified, and do know that they, so justified, shall live and remain with him everlastingly ?

*That God will be praised in all Languages.*

“ All that hath breath, praise the Lord,” saith the Psalm ; thence it followeth that in all and every language, speeches, and tongues we should preach and praise the Lord. Why then, said

Luther, have the Pope and the Emperor forbidden to sing and pray in the German tongue ?

*That God is willing we should make use of his Creatures.*

Our loving Lord God is willing that we eat, drink, and be merry, and make use of his creatures, for therefore he hath created them. He will not have that we should complain, as if he had not given sufficient, or that he could not maintain our poor carcases ; only that we do acknowledge him for our God, and thank him for his gifts.

*That God fills the Bellies of the Ungodly, but he gives the Kingdom of Heaven to the Good and Godly.*

We believe, said Luther, that God will give to us no better things than he giveth to the rich ungodly wretches in this world, to whom he gives an overplus, and the fill of good wine, money, wealth, power, honour, and all things that they would have or can desire. But the best wealth and treasure, which they do not desire, he denies them, namely,

himself. But he that hath not God, let him have else what he will, so is he, notwithstanding, more miserable than was Lazarus, that lay at the rich man's gate and was starved to death. But it will go even so with them as it went with the glutton, that they everlastinglly must hunger and want, and shall not have in all their power so much as the least drop of water, &c.

If, then, said Luther, the almighty and liberal God in such wise doth heap blessings upon his worst enemies and blasphemers, with all manner of temporal goods and wealth, and gives to some also kingdoms, principalities, &c., then may we, that are his children, easily conceive what he will give unto us, who for his sake must suffer—yea, what he hath already given us. He hath given unto us his only-begotten Son, and with him hath bestowed all things upon us, so that through him we are God's children, and also heirs of his celestial treasure, and are co-heirs with Christ according to hope.

*Court Cards.*

God regards ungodly great Potentates, Kings, and Princes even as children regard playing at cards. While they play, and have good cards, they hold them in their hands ; then, afterwards, when they have bad cards, they are weary of them, and throw them under the bench. Just so doth God with great Potentates. While they are in the government, and rule well, he holds them for good ; but so soon as they do exceed, and govern ill, then he throws them down from their seat, as Mary sings, and there he lets them lie. *Ut Regem Daniæ.*

The Queen of Denmark, that was sister to the Emperor Charles and King Ferdinand, died at that time when her husband, King Christian, was taken prisoner, who was kept in prison twenty years. And his son, who was the only heir of the kingdom, and was in the Court of the Emperor, died also at the Imperial Diet held at Ratisbon the same year, 1541. God hath taken up and gathered

together a fine and glorious game at cards, all of mighty Potentates, as Emperors, Kings, Princes, &c.; they scuffle and fight one with another; touching which, said Luther, I could show many examples done in our time, &c.

“The Pope,” said Melancthon, “for the space of these certain hundred years, hath been held for the principal Head of all Christendom. When he did but wink or hold up one finger, so must the Emperors, Kings, and Princes have humbled themselves and feared; insomuch that he was Lord of all Lords, King of all Kings on earth; yea, he was an earthly god. But now comes Almighty God, throws down the Pope, and wins that great king with the ace (Luther), and there he lies. This is God’s government, as Mary sings in her Magnificat: *Depositum potentes*—He puts down the mighty from their seat, &c.

“If I were rich,” said Melancthon, “I would have artificially made me a game at cards, and a chess-board all of gold and silver, in a remembrance of God’s game at cards, which are all great and mighty Emperors, Kings, and Princes, where he

always thrusteth one out through another. N. is the four of diamonds, the Pope is the six of diamonds, the Turk is the eight of diamonds, the Emperor is the king in the game.

"At last comes our Lord God, divides the game, beats the Pope with Luther (he is the ace). But the Pope is not yet quite dead ; Christ hath begun to slay him with the spirit of his mouth, so that he is dead in the hearts of believing Christians. I hope it is almost come so far that, in less than two hundred years, God will quite make an end of him, and of that antichristian idolatry, by his glorious coming.

*Whoso from his Heart can humble himself before  
God, he hath gained.*

Whoso can earnestly humble himself from his heart before God, he hath gained. For God can do nothing but to be merciful towards them that humble themselves. For if God should always be stern and angry, so should I, said Luther, be afraid of him as of the executioner. And seeing that I must stand in fear of the Pope, of the Emperor, of

the Papistical Bishops, and of other tyrants, which are God's enemies, to whom then should I fly and take my refuge, if I should also be afraid of God ?

*That God preserves Nurture and Discipline.*

God's works and actions will be where good nurture and discipline is maintained, especially in wars, where a good government is settled ; otherwise it goeth strangely, dissolutely, and ill, as in this time we see too well.

When God will confound the wisdom of the wise, he makes them first mad and furious in their proceedings, as he dealt with the Popish Princes and Bishops at the Imperial Diet held at Augsburg.

Let the adversaries rage and swell their fills, said Luther, and as long as they can. God hath set the sea her bounds ; he suffers the same to beat and rage with her waves, as if they would over-run, cover, and drown everything ; yet, notwithstanding, they must not pass the shore and banks, although God keeps the waters in their compass, not with iron, but with weak walls of sand. This discourse Luther held at that time when letters were written

unto him from the Assembly at Frankfort, concerning the Papists, with their practices and exploits, intending to fall upon the Protestants in all parts.

The second Psalm, said Luther, is one of the best Psalms. I love that Psalm with my heart. It strikes and slashes valiantly amongst the Kings, Princes, Counsellors, Judges, &c. If it be true what this Psalm saith, then are the allegations of the Papists stark lies. If I were as our Lord God, and had committed the government to my son, as he hath done to his Son, and that these angry gentlemen were so disobedient as they now are, I would, said Luther, throw the world into a lump.

Mary, the poor child-maid of Nazareth, also combateth with these great Kings, Princes, &c., as she sings, "He hath put down the mighty from their seat," &c. No doubt, said Luther, she had an excellent undaunted voice. I, for my part, dare not sing so. The tyrants say, "Let us break their bonds asunder." What that is, said he, present experience teacheth us; for we see how they drown, how they hang, burn, behead,

strangle, banish, and torture; and all this they do in despite of God. "But he sits above in heaven, and laugheth them to scorn." If, said Luther, God would be pleased to give me a little time and space, that I might expound a couple of small Psalms, I would bestir myself so boldly that, Samson-like, I would take all the Papists away with me.

*By reason of our stiff-necked Hardness, God must be both harsh and good too.*

I was, said Luther, very lately sharply reprimanded and taxed by a Popish flattering Courtier, a Priest, because with such passion I had written, and so vehemently had reproved the people. But I answered him and said, "Our Lord God must first send a sharp pouring shower, with thunder and lightning, and afterwards cause it mildly to rain, as then it wetteth finely through. In like manner, a willow or a hazel wand I can easily cut with my trencher-knife, but for a hard oak a man must have and use axes, bills, and such-like, and all little enough to fell and to cleave it."

*What that is, God is nothing, and yet he is all  
Things.*

Plato, the Heathen, disputed of God, that God is nothing, and yet he is all things ; him followed Dr. Eck, and the Sophists, who understood nothing thereof, as their words do show, which no man could understand. But, said Luther, we must understand and speak of it in this manner : God is incomprehensible and invisible, therefore what may be seen and comprehended, that is not God. And thus a man may speak also in another manner and wise : As God is either visible or invisible ; visible he is in his Word and Works, but where his Word and Works are not, there a man should not desire to have him, for he will be found nowhere else than where he hath revealed himself. But these and such-like will find and take hold of him with their speculations, so that instead of God they take hold of the devil, and find him, for he will be also a god. But I do truly admonish and warn every one that they abstain from such speculations, and

not to flutter too high, but remain by the manger, and by the swaddling-clothes wherein Christ doth lie (in the Holy Scriptures), “in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,” as St. Paul saith (Col. ii.). There a man cannot fail of God, but finds and hits upon him most certainly. I would willingly that this rule might be observed after my death, namely: Human comfort and Divine comfort are of two sorts: human comfort consisteth in external visible help, which a man may see, hold, and feel; but Divine comfort consisteth only in words and promises, where there is neither seeing, hearing, nor feeling.

*That Children are God's special Blessings and  
Creatures.*

Dr. Jonas, inviting Luther to a dinner, had caused a bough, with ripe cherries, to be hung up over the table where they dined, in remembrance of the creation, thereby to put his guests in mind to praise the glorious God in his blessing and creating such fruits, &c. But Luther asked him why he did not rather remember the same by his

children that were the fruit of his body. For, said he, they surpass and are far more excelling creatures of God than all the fruits of trees. By them we see God's Power, Wisdom, and Art, who hath made them all out of nothing, hath given them in one year life and all members, so exquisitely hath created and will maintain and preserve them. Yet, notwithstanding, we do not much regard it ; nay, we are in such gifts of God blind and covetous, as commonly it falleth out that people when they have got children grow worse and more covetous ; they rake and rend all they can, to the end enough may be left for their children. They do not know that before a child comes to the world, and is born, it hath its lot ; and already is ordained and determined what and how much it shall have, and what shall be thereout. In the state of matrimony we learn and find that begetting and bearing of children stands and consists not in our wills and pleasures, for the parents can neither see nor know whether they be fruitful or no, nor whether God will give them a son or a daughter. All this is done without our ordaining, thinking, or foreknowledge. My

father and mother did not think that they should have brought a superintendent into the world ; it is only God's Creation which we cannot rightly understand nor conceive. I believe, said Luther, that in the life to come we shall have nothing else to do than to meditate of our Creator, and of his celestial creatures, and wonder at the same.

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#### OF THE NATURE OF THE WORLD.

*Of the World, and of the Manner thereof.*

The world, said Luther, will neither have nor hold God for God, nor the devil for the devil. And if a man were left to himself, and should be suffered to do after his own kind and nature, then would he willingly throw our Lord God out at the window ; for the world regards God nothing at all, as the Psalm saith, *Dixit impius in corde suo, non est Deus.* On the contrary, the god of the world is riches, pleasure, and pride, wherewith they abuse all the creatures and gifts of God.

The Monks and Friars, in times past, boasted

much of their contemning of the world, and they made use of that speech of St. Paul (Rom. xii.), “ Be not conformed to this world ; ” from whence they would touch no money, as if it were against God to make use of riches, money, and wealth ; whereas St. Paul and the whole Scriptures forbid but only the abuse of heart, wicked lust, desire, and inclination ; as there is ambition, incontinency, revenge, &c., which lusts do hang on the world ; yea, they altogether flow and flourish.

*Of the Manner of People in Eating.*

We have the nature and manner of all wild beasts in eating. The wolves eat sheep ; we also. The foxes eat hens, geese, &c. ; we also. The hawks and kites eat fowl and birds ; we also. Pikes do eat other fish ; we also. With oxen, horse, and kine, we also eat sallets, grass, &c.

*The Unthankfulness of Husbandmen and Farmers.*

The husbandmen and rich farmers, said Luther, are not worthy of so many benefits and fruits which the earth doth bear and bring unto them. I give

more thanks to our Lord God for one tree or bush than all rich farmers and husbandmen do for their large and fruitful grounds. Yet, said he, we must except some husbandmen, as Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Isaac, who went out to see their grounds, to the end they might remember God's gifts in his creatures. (Gen. xxiv.)

The world will have night owls, said Luther, that is, sectaries, seducers, and unbelievers, about whom the birds do fly ; that is, the world wonders at them, entertains them with great honour, and gives them money and wealth enough.

*The Gospel discovereth the Wickedness of Mankind.*

As the cold, said Luther, is always greater and more piercing in winter when the days begin to lengthen, and when the sun draws near unto us, for that maketh the cold thicker, and presseth it together : just so the wickedness of mankind is greater, that is, more visible, and breaks out when the Gospel is preached ; for the Holy Ghost reproveth the world of sin, which the world neither can nor will endure.

*The World's Unthankfulness towards the Servants of God.*

He must be of a high and great spirit that undertaketh to serve the people both in body and soul, and nevertheless must suffer the utmost danger and highest unthankfulness. Therefore Christ said to Peter, Simon, &c., " Lovest thou me ? " and repeated it three times together. Afterwards he said, " Feed my sheep," as if he would say, " Wilt thou be an upright Minister and a Shepherd ? then love must only do it ; thy love to me must do the deed, otherwise it is impossible." For who can endure unthankfulness ? to study away his wealth and health, and afterwards to lay himself open to the highest danger and unthankfulness of the wicked world ? Therefore he saith, " It is very needful that thou lovest me."

The Pope and Turk, said Luther, have thoroughly revenged our cause, and have done to the world a great deal of right, as by scourging experience they have thoroughly been taught, for so the world will have it. Upright and true servants of God they

will not endure, nay, they murder them, therefore they must have such fellows, yea, and moreover, they must maintain and hold them in great honour and esteem, and yet nevertheless must by them be cursed and deceived.

*The World must have stern and fierce Rulers.*

The world, said Luther, cannot be without such stern Governors, by whom they must be ruled. King Ferdinand, with his Popish tyranny, is even a fine liquorish bit for the world; therefore said God, through the Prophet Samuel, to his people of Israel that prayed for a King, He would give them a King, but this shall be his rule: “He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen, and will take your daughters to be cooks,” &c. As Ferdinand, the Prince Elector of Saxony, returned home from the election of the Emperor Charles at Cologne, he asked me how I liked the news, that they had elected Charles, King of Spain, to be Roman Emperor. I answered him and said, “The ravens must have a kite.”

*The World's highest Wisdom.*

The highest wisdom of the world is, said Luther, to trouble themselves with temporal, earthly, and vanishing things ; and as it happeneth and falleth out with those things, they say, "*Non putaram*" (I had not thought it). For faith is a certain and a sure expectation of that which a man hopeth for, and maketh no doubt of that which he seeth not, as the Epistle to the Hebrews saith : Faith looks to that which is to come, and not to that which is already present. Therefore a true Christian doth not say, "*Non putaram*" (I had not thought it) ; but he is most certain that the beloved Cross is near at hand, and will surely come upon him ; therefore he is not afraid when it goeth evil with him, and he is tormented. But the world, and those that live securely in the world, cannot brook misfortunes ; they go on continually leaping and dancing in pleasure and delight, like the rich Glutton in the Gospel. He could not spare the scraps to poor Lazarus, but Lazarus belonged to Christ, and he took his part.

*The Language and Doings of the World.*

Albertus, Bishop of Mentz, had a physician attending on his person who was a Protestant, and therefore the less in the Bishop's favour ; the same, being covetous and puffed up with ambition, recanted his religion and fell to Popery, uttering these words : "I will, for awhile, set Christ behind the door, until I be grown rich, and then I will take him to me again." Such and the like blasphemous words do deserve the highest punishments, as befell that wicked dissembling wretch, for the same night he was found in his bed in a most fearful manner, with his tongue torn out of his mouth, as black as a coal, and his neck wrung in twain. Myself, said Luther, at that time coming from Frankfort to Mentz, was an eye-witness of that just judgment of God. If, said he, a man could bring to pass, and at his pleasure could set God behind the door, and take him again when he listed, then was God his prisoner. They were words of a damned Epicure, and so accordingly he was rewarded.

*Luther's Comparison of the World.*

The world seems to me like unto a decayed house. David and the Prophets are the spars; Christ is the main pillar in the midst that supporteth all.

*The World seeketh Immortality with their Pride.*

Whereas all people do feel and acknowledge, yea, do see, that they must die and vanish away, every one therefore seeketh here on earth immortality, that he may be had in everlasting remembrance. Sometimes great Princes and Kings sought it by causing great columns of marble stone and exceedingly high pyramids, buildings, and pillars four square to be erected, as at this time they do with building great churches, costly and glorious palaces and castles, &c. Soldiers do look and hunt after great praise and honour by overcoming and obtaining famous victories. The learned seek an everlasting name in writing books, as in our time is to be seen. With these and such-like, people do think to be immortal. But on the true, everlasting, and

incorruptible honour and eternity of God, no man thinketh nor looketh after the same. Ah ! we are poor, silly, and miserable people !

*What is to be considered in the executing of  
Offices.*

If, said Luther, the great pains and labour which I take sprang not from love and for the sake of him that died for me, the world could not give me money enough to write only one book, or to translate the Bible. I desire not to be rewarded and paid of the world for my book ; the world is too poor and simple to give me satisfaction. I have not desired the value of one penny of my master the Prince Elector of Saxony, so long as I have been in this place. The whole world is nothing else but a turned-about *Decalogus*, or the Ten Commandments backwards, a wizard, and a picture of the devil. All contemners of God, all blasphemers, all disobedient ; whoredom, pride, theft, murder, &c., are now almost ripe for the slaughter ; neither is the devil idle, with Turk and Pope, heresies and other erroneous sects. Every man

draws the Christian liberty only to carnal excess, as if now they had free liberty and power to do what they list ; therefore the kingdom of the devil and Pope is the best government for the world, for therewith they will be governed with strict laws and rights, with superstition, unbelief, &c.

The world grows worse through the doctrine of God's Grace and preaching of the Gospel ; for when they hear that after this life there is another, they are well enough content with this life, and that God should keep the other to himself ; if they may have here but only good days, honour, and wealth, that is all they care for or desire.

At the time of my being in Rome, said Luther, there died a Cardinal very rich, and left behind him great store of money ; shortly before his death he made his will, and laid it in a chest where the money was. After his death the chest was opened, and therein, by the money, was found lying a bull, written on parchment, with these words :

*Dum potui, rapui ; rapiatis, quando potestis.*

(I extorted and oppressed as long as I was able ; while ye have power, get what you can.)

Oh ! said Luther, how finely, think you, must this Cardinal have departed and died ?

*The World is full of Dissemblers and Blasphemers :  
How many Sorts there be.*

Luther discoursing, in the presence of the Prince Elector of Saxony and other Princes, of the many sorts and differences of wicked persons, said : Colax, Sycophanta, Cacoëthes ; these sins and blasphemies are almost alike the one to the other, only that they go one after another, as a man going up the stairs and steps ascends from one to another.

Colax, in my opinion, is he that in Terence they name Gnatho, an ear-scratcher, a dissembler, a trencher-licker, one that talketh for his belly's sake, and is altogether a man-pleaser. This is a sin of mankind, whose intent is to get all they can though others are hurt thereby.

Sycophanta is such a dissembler, traitor, and backbiter that would earn a grey coat. This sin is nearer allied to the devil than to mankind. Gnatho acts his part in the comedies, but Sycophanta in the tragedies. Phormio, in Terence, is a very honest

person, nothing, or very little, stained with the other two vices.

Cacoëthes is a wicked villain, that wittingly and wilfully prepareth mischief.

*Of the Wealth and Treasure of the World.*

The Fuggars\* of Augsburg, on a sudden, said Luther, are able to levy one hundred tons of gold (one ton of gold is one hundred thousand rix dollars, making, in English money, two-and-twenty thousand pounds sterling, and more), which neither the Emperor nor King of Spain is able to perform. One of the Fuggars, after his death, left eighty tons of gold. The Fuggars and the money-changers in Augsburg lent the Emperor at one time eight-and-twenty tons of gold for the maintaining of his wars before Padua.

The Cardinal of Brixen, who died at Rome very rich, left no great sum of ready money behind him, but only there was found in his sleeve a little note of a finger's length. This note was brought to Pope Julius, who presently imagined it was a note of

\* The name of a rich family.

money, and therefore sent for the Fuggars' factor that was then at Rome, and asked him if he knew that writing. The factor said, "Yea, it was the debt which the Fuggars did owe to that Cardinal, which was the sum of forty hundred thousand rix dollars." The Pope asked him how soon he could pay that sum of money. He answered and said, "Every day, or, if need required, at an hour's warning." Then the Pope called for the Ambassadors of France and England, and asked them if either of their Kings, in one hour's space, were able to satisfy and pay forty tons of gold. They answered, "No." "Then," said the Pope, "one citizen of Augsburg can do it." And the Pope got all that money. One of the Fuggars being warned by the Senate of Augsburg to bring in and to pay his taxation, said, "I know not how much I have, nor how rich I am, therefore I cannot be taxed;" for he had his money out in the whole world—in Turkey, in Greece, at Alexandria, in France, Portugal, England, Poland, and everywhere, yet he was willing to pay his tax of that which he had in Augsburg.

*Covetousness is a Sign of Death; we must not rely on Money and Wealth.*

Whoso hath money, said Luther, and depends thereon, as is usual, it neither proceeds nor prospers well with that person. The richest monarchs have had bad fortune, and lamentably have been destroyed and slain in the wars; on the contrary, poor and unable people, that have had but small store of money, have overcome and had great fortune and victory. As Emperor Maximilian overcame the Venetians, and continued wars ten years with them, who were exceedingly rich and powerful. Therefore we ought not to trust in money and wealth, nor to depend thereon. I hear, said Luther, that the Prince Elector, George, begins to be covetous, which is a sign of his death very shortly. When I saw Dr. Goad begin to count his puddings hanging in the chimney, I told him he would not live long, which fell out accordingly; and when I begin to trouble myself about brewing, malting, and cooking, &c., then shall not I drive it long, but soon die.

*The Popes' Covetousness.*

The covetousness of the Popes has exceeded all others', therefore, said Luther, the devil made choice of Rome to be his habitation ; for which cause the ancients have said, "Rome is a den of covetousness, a root of all wickedness." I have also read in a very old book this verse following :

*Versus Amor, Mundi Caput est, et Bestia Terræ.*

That is (when the word Amor is turned and read backward, then it is Roma), Rome, the head of the world, a beast that sucketh out and devoureth all lands. Truly at Rome is an abominable trading with covetousness, for all is raked to their hands without preaching or church-service, but only with superstition, idolatry, and with selling their good works to the poor ignorant lay-people for money ; therefore St. Peter describeth such covetousness with express and clear words when he saith, "They have an heart exercised with covetous practices." I am persuaded a man cannot acknowledge the disease of covetousness unless he knoweth Rome ; for the deceits and jugglings in other parts are

nothing in comparison of those at Rome ; therefore, anno 1521, at the Imperial Diet held at Worms, the State of the whole Empire made supplication against such covetousness, and desired that his Imperial Majesty would be pleased to suppress the same.

At that time, said Luther, my book was presented to the German nobility, which Dr. Wick showed unto me. Then the Gospel began to go on well, but the Pope's power, together with the Antinomians, gave it a great blow, and yet, notwithstanding, through God's Providence, it was thereby furthered.

The Pope's power was above all Kings and Emperors, which power I opposed with my little book ; and therewith also I assaulted the Bull on the Pope, and, by God's assistance, overthrew it. I did not write that book on purpose against the Pope, but only against the abuses of Popedom ; yet nevertheless it startled them quickly, for their consciences accused them.

*Princes do draw and tear Spiritual Livings  
unto them.*

The proverb is, said Luther, “Priests’ livings are catching livings,” and that “Priests’ goods never prosper.” This we know to be true by experience, for such as have drawn spiritual livings unto them are grown poor thereby, and become beggars, therefore this Fable I like very well :

There was an Eagle that made amity and friendship with the Fox ; they agreed to dwell peaceably together. Now when the Fox expected from the Eagle all manner of good offices and turns, he brought his young ones and laid them under the tree on which the Eagle had his nest and young ones ; but the friendship between them lasted not long, for so soon as the Eagle wanted meat for his young (the Fox being out of the way), he flew down and took the young Foxes and carried them into his nest, and therewith fed his young Eagles. When, therefore, the old Fox returned, and saw that his young were taken away, he made his complaint to the great god Jupiter, desiring that he

would revenge and punish that injury of *Jus violati hospitii*. Not long after, as the Eagle again wanted meat to feed his young, he saw that on a place in the field they sacrificed to Jupiter. The Eagle flew thither, and quickly snatched away a piece of roast from the altar and brought the same to his young, and flew again to fetch more ; but it happened that a hot coal hung to one of the pieces ; the same, falling into the Eagle's nest, set it on fire ; the young Eagles, not able to fly, were burned with the nest and fell to the ground. Even so it usually fareth with those that rake and rend spiritual livings unto them, which are given to the maintaining of God's honour and service ; such at last must lose their nests, that is, they must be left destitute of their temporal goods and livings, and besides, must sustain hurt of body and soul. Spiritual livings have in them the nature of Eagle's feathers, for when they are laid to other feathers they devour the same. Even so, when men will mingle spiritual livings (*per fas aut nefas*) with other goods, so must the same likewise be consumed, insomuch that at last nothing will be left.

I have seen a pretty dog, at Lintz, in Austria that was taught to go with a hand-basket to the butcher's shambles for meat ; now, when other dogs came about him, and would take the meat out of the basket, he set it down, bit and fought lustily with the other dogs ; but when he saw they would be too strong for him, then he himself would snatch out the first piece of meat, lest he should lose all. Even so doth now our Emperor Charles, who, after he hath a long time defended the spiritual livings, and seeth that every Prince taketh and raketh the monasteries unto himself, doth also now take possession of bishoprics, as newly he hath snatched to himself the bishoprics of Utrich and Luttich, to the end he may get also *partem de tunica Christi*.

*A fearful Example of Covetousness.*

A covetous farmer, well known at Erfurt, said Luther, carried his corn to sell there in the market ; but holding it at too dear a rate, no man would buy of him nor give him his price ; he being thereby moved to anger, said, " I will not sell it cheaper,

but will rather carry it home again and give it to the mice." As he came home therewith, an innumerable number of mice and rats flocked about his house and devoured up all his corn. And the next day following, going out to see his grounds, which were newly sown, he found that all the seed was eaten up, and no hurt at all done upon the grounds belonging to his neighbours. This certainly, said Luther, was a just punishment from God, and a token of his wrath against the unthankful world.

*Wealth is the least Gift of God.*

Riches, said Luther, is the smallest thing on earth, and the least gift that God hath bestowed on mankind. What is it in comparison of God's Word? yea, what is it to be compared with corporeal gifts, as beauty, health, &c.? nay, what is it to the gifts of the mind, as understanding, art, wisdom, &c.? Yet are men so eager after it that no labour, travel, nor danger is regarded in the getting of riches; there is in it neither *Materialis, formalis, efficiens et finalis causa*, nor anything else that is good; therefore our Lord God commonly

giveth riches to such from whom he withholds all Spiritual good.

*Giving to the Poor that truly stand in need of our Help.*

St. John saith, “He that hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ?” And Christ saith, “He that desireth of thee, give to him ;” that is, to him that hath need and is in want. He saith not to every idle, lazy, and wasteful companion, which commonly are the greatest beggars, to whom although one gave much and often, yet were they nothing helped thereby. In this town, said Luther, no men are in greater want than the students and scholars. The poverty here indeed is great, but idleness and laziness are far greater. A man can scarcely get a poor body to work for money, and yet they will all beg. There is, said he, no good government. Though I were able, yet I would not give to those idle beggars, for the more one helpeth and giveth them, the more and oftener

they come. I will not cut my bread away from my wife and children, and give it to such; but when one is truly poor, to him I will give with all my heart, according to my ability. And no man should forget that Scripture which saith, "He that hath two coats, let him part with one," &c.; for the Holy Scripture, in naming a coat, meaneth all manner of apparel that one hath need of, according to his state and calling, as well for credit as for necessity. As, also, by "the daily bread" is understood all maintenance necessary for the body, therefore "a coat," in Scripture, is signified to be all usual apparel.

*The World will always have new Things.*

Before I translated the New Testament out of the Greek, said Luther, every one longed after it, to read therein, but when it was done their longing lasted scarce four weeks. Then they desired the Books of Moses; when I had translated those, they had enough thereof in a short time. After that they would have the Psalter; of the same they

were soon weary ; when it was translated, then they desired other books.

In like manner, said he, will it be with the Book of Ecclesiasticus, which they now long for, and about which I have taken great pains in the translating thereof. All are acceptable, so long and until our giddy brains be satisfied ; afterwards they let them lie, and seek after new things ; therefore in the end there must come errors among us.

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### OF THE LORD CHRIST.

*That Christ warreth with great Potentates.*

On the 18th of August, 1535, Luther, receiving letters from Frankfort relating to the great preparations of the Emperor against the Protestants, said : Our Saviour Christ will not wage wars with beggars, but with great and powerful Kings and Princes, as it is written, “Kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.” Well, on, said Luther, they will find their counsels

altogether vain and frivolous, for Christ shall win the field. We see also how the Prophets contended and strove with Kings, as the Kings of Babel and Assyria, &c. In like manner Daniel, one of the chief Prophets, wrestled and strove with Kings, and they again resisted the Prophets. All those Kings are gone, and lie in the ashes, but Christ remaineth still, and will remain a King for ever.

*That it doth not follow because Christ did this and that, therefore we must also do the same.*

At this time, said Luther, there are those that allege Christ by force drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple; therefore we also may use the like power against the Popish bishops and enemies of God's Word, as Muntzer and other seducers, in the time of the common rebellion, anno 1525. Christ did many things which we neither may nor can do after him. He went upon the water, he fasted forty days and forty nights, he raised Lazarus from death after he had lain four days in the grave, &c. Such and the like must we leave

undone. Much less will Christ have that we by force should set against the enemies of the truth, but he commanded the contrary, "Love your enemies, pray for them that vex and persecute you," &c. But we ought to follow him in such works where he hath annexed an open command, as, "Be merciful, as your Father is merciful ;" likewise, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and humble in heart," &c. , also, "He that will follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."

*That the weak in Faith do also belong to the  
Kingdom of Christ.*

The weak in faith, said Luther, do also belong to the kingdom of Christ, otherwise the Lord would not have said to Peter, "Strengthen thy brethren," Luke xxii. ; and Rom. xiv., "Receive the weak in faith ;" also 1 Thess. v., "Comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak." If the weak in faith should not belong to Christ, where then would the Apostles have been, whom the Lord oftentimes

(also after his resurrection, Mark xvi.) reproved because of their unbelief ?

*That Christ is the only Physician against Death, whom notwithstanding very few do desire.*

A cup of water, said Luther, if a man can have no better, is good to quench the thirst. A morsel of bread stilleth the hunger, and he that hath need seeketh earnestly thereafter. So Christ is the best, surest, and only physic against the most fearful enemy of mankind, the devil, but they believe it not with their hearts. If they knew a physician who lived above one hundred miles off, that could prevent or drive away temporal death, oh, how diligently would he be sent for ! No money nor cost would be spared. Hence it appears how abominably human nature is spoiled and blinded ; yet, notwithstanding, the small and little heap do stick fast to the true Physician, and by this art do learn that which the holy old Simeon well knew, from whence he joyfully sang, “ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation,” &c., therefore death became his

sleep; but from whence came his great joy? Because that with spiritual and corporeal eyes he saw the Saviour of the world—he saw the true Physician against sin and death. Therefore it is a great trouble to behold how desirous a thirsty body is of drink, or one that is hungry of food, whereas a cup of water, a morsel of bread, can still hunger and thirst no longer than two or three hours, but no man, or very few, are desirous, or do long after the most precious Physician, although he lovingly calleth and allureth all to come unto him, and saith, “He that is athirst, let him come to me and drink” (John vii.); so, “He that believeth in me, from his body shall flow streams of living water.”

*Of the Temple of all the Gods (except Christ), at Rome, called Pantheon.*

In the year 606, Emperor Phocas, the murderer of that good and godly Emperor Mauritius, and the first erector of the Pope's primacy, gave this temple Pantheon to Pope Boniface the Third, to make thereof what he pleased. He gave it another name, and instead of All-Idols he named it the

Church of All-Saints ; he did not number Christ among them, from whom all saints have their sanctity, but erected a new idolatry, the Invocation of Saints.

In my chronicle, said Luther, I expound the name of Bonifacius thus : Bonifacius is a Popish name, that is, a good form, fashion, or show, for under the colour of a good form and show he acted all manner of mischief against God and man.

As I was at Rome, said Luther, I saw this church ; it had no windows, but only a round hole on the top, which gave some light. It was vaulted high, and had pillars of marble stone so thick that two of us could scarcely fathom one about. Above, on the vault, were portrayed all the gods of the heathen, Jupiter, Neptune, Mars, Venus, and how else they are called. These gods were at a union, to the end they might fool and deceive the whole world ; but Christ they cannot endure, for he hath whipped them out. Now are the Popes come, and have driven Christ away again ; but who knoweth how long it will continue ?

*That the World knoweth not Christ, nor those  
that are his.*

Even as Christ is now invisible and unknown to the world, so are we Christians also invisible and unknown therein. "Your life," saith St. Paul (Coloss. iii.), "is hid with Christ in God." Therefore, said Luther, the world knoweth us not, much less do they see Christ in us. And John the Apostle saith, "Behold, what love the Father hath showed unto us, that we shall be called God's children" (1 John iii). Therefore we and the world are easily parted ; they care nothing for us, so we care less for them ; yea, through Christ the world is crucified unto us, and we to the world. Let them go with their wealth, and leave us to our minds and manners.

When we have our sweet and loving Saviour Christ, then we are rich and happy more than enough, we care nothing for their state, honour, and wealth. But we often lose our Saviour Christ, and little think that he is in us, and we in him ; that he is ours, and we are his. And although he hideth

himself from us, as we think, in the time of need for a moment, yet are we comforted in his promise, where he saith, "I am daily with you to the world's end;" the same is our best and richest treasure.

*Of the Name Jesus Christ.*

I know nothing of Jesus Christ, said Luther, but only his name; I neither have heard nor seen him corporeally; yet notwithstanding I have, God be praised, learned so much out of the Scriptures that I am well and thoroughly satisfied; therefore, I desire neither to see nor to hear him corporeally. And besides this, when I was left and forsaken of all men, in my highest weakness, in trembling and in fear of death, when I was persecuted of the wicked world, then I oftentimes felt most evidently the divine power which this name (Christ Jesus) communicated unto me; this name (Christ Jesus) oftentimes delivered me when I was in the midst of death, and made me alive again. It comforted me in the greatest despair, and particularly at the Imperial Assembly at Augsburg, anno 1530, when I

was forsaken of every man ; insomuch that, by God's grace, I will live and die for that name.

And rather than I will yield, or through silence endure that Erasmus Roterodamus, or any other whosoever he be, should too nearly touch my Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus with his ungodly false doctrine, how fairly coloured soever it be trimmed or garnished, I say I will rather die ; yea, it should be more tolerable for me, with wife and children, to undergo all plagues and torments, and at last to die the most shameful death, than that I should give way thereunto.

*That Christ and the Pope are set on, the one against the other.*

I, said Luther, have set Christ and the Pope together by the ears, therefore I trouble myself no further ; and although I come between the door and the hinges and be squeezed, it is no matter, though I go to the ground ; yet notwithstanding Christ will go through with it.

*Of the Pre-eminence of God's Word.*

Christ once appeared visible here on earth, and showed his glory, and, according to the divine counsel and purpose of God, he finished the work of redemption and the deliverance of mankind. I do not desire that he should come once more, neither would I that he should send an angel unto me ; and although an angel should come and appear before mine eyes from heaven, yet would I not believe him ; for I have of my Saviour Christ Jesus bond and seal ; that is, I have his Word and Spirit ; thereon I do depend, and desire no new revelations. And, said Luther, the more steadfastly to confirm me in the same resolution, and to remain by God's Word, and not to give credit to any visions or revelations, I shall relate the following circumstance :— I being on Good Friday last in my inner chamber, in fervent prayer, contemplating with myself how Christ my Saviour hung on the Cross, how he suffered and died for our sins, there suddenly appeared upon the wall a bright shining vision, and a glorious form of our Saviour Christ, with the five

wounds, steadfastly looking upon me, as if it had been Christ himself corporeally. Now, at the first sight, I thought it had been some good Revelation : yet I recollect that surely it must needs be the juggling of the devil, for Christ appeareth unto us in his word, and in a meaner and more humble form ; therefore I spake to the vision in this manner : “ Avoid, thou confounded devil ; I know no other Christ than he who was crucified, and who in his Word is pictured unto me.” Whereupon the image vanished.

*That Christ is the Health and Wisdom of the Faithful.*

Alas ! said Luther, what is our wit and wisdom ? for before we understand anything as we ought, we lie down and die ; therefore the devil hath good striving with us. When one is thirty years old, so hath he as yet *Stultitias carnales* ; yea, also *Stultitias spirituales* ; yet it is much to be admired that, in such our imbecility and weakness, we achieve and accomplish so much and such great matters ; but it is God that giveth it. God gave

to Alexander the Great, *Sapientiam et fortunam*, Wisdom and good success; yet, notwithstanding, he calleth him, in the Prophet Jeremiah, *Juvenem*, a youth, where he saith, “*Quis excitabit juvenem*” (A young raw milksop boy shall perform it: he shall come and turn the city Tyrus upside-down). But yet Alexander could not leave off his foolishness, for oftentimes he swilled himself drunk, and in his drunkenness he stabbed his best and worthiest friends; yea, afterwards he drank himself to death at Babel. Neither was Solomon above twenty years old when he was made King, but he was well instructed by Nathan, and desired wisdom, which was pleasing to God, as the text saith. But now chests full of money are desired. “Oh!” say we now, “if I had but money, then I would do so-and-so.”

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### OF SINS AND OF FREE-WILL.

*Of the Fall of the Ungodly, and how they are surprised in their Ungodliness and False Doctrine.*

Our Lord God, said Luther, suffereth the ungodly to be surprised and taken captive in very

slight and small things, when they think not of it, when they are most secure, and live in delight and pleasure, in springing and leaping for joy. In such a manner was the Pope surprised by me, in and about his indulgences and pardons, which was altogether a slight thing. The Venetians, likewise, were taken napping by Emperor Maximilian.

That which falleth in Heaven is devilish, but that which stumbleth on earth is human.

*Of the Acknowledgment of Sins.*

It can be hurtful to none, said Luther, to acknowledge and confess their sins. Have we done this or that sin, what then? Let us freely in God's name acknowledge the same, and not deny it; let us not be ashamed to confess, but let us from our hearts say, "O Lord God! I am such-and-such a sinner," &c.

And although thou hadst not committed this or that sin, yet nevertheless thou art an ungodly creature; and if thou hast not done that sin which another hath done, so hath he not committed that

sin which thou hast done ; therefore cry quittance one with another. It is even as one said that had young wolves to sell ; he was asked which of them was the best. He answered and said, "If one be good, then they are all good ; they are like one another." If, said Luther, thou hast been a murderer, an adulterer, or a drunkard, &c., so have I been a blasphemer of God, because for the space of fifteen years together I was a Friar, and have blasphemed God with celebrating that abominable idol the Mass. It had been better for me that I had been a partaker of other great wickednesses instead of the same ; but what is done cannot be undone ; he that hath stolen, let him henceforward steal no more.

*What our Free-will doth effect.*

I, said Luther, oftentimes have been directly resolved to live uprightly, and to lead a true godly life, and to set everything aside that would let or hinder ; but it was far from being put in execution, even as it was with Peter, when he swore he would lay down his life for Christ.

I will not lie nor dissemble before my God, but will freely confess I am not able to effect that good which I do intend, but must expect the happy hour when God shall be pleased to meet me with his grace.

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### OF THE CATECHISM.

#### *Of the Virtues and Vices concerning the Ten Commandments.*

The *Decalogus*, that is, the Ten Commandments of God, are a looking-glass, and a brief sum of all virtues and doctrines, both how we ought to behave towards God and also towards our neighbour, that is, towards all mankind.

There never was at any time written a more excellent, complete, nor compendious book of virtues.

The duty of the First and Second Commandment is to fear God, to love and to trust in him ; the contrary is sin and vice, an ungodly life, contemning of God, hatred, despair, &c.

The duty of the Third Commandment is to

acknowledge and to preach the doctrine of God's Word ; the contrary is blaspheming of God, to be silent and not to confess the truth when need requireth.

The duty of the Fourth Commandment is the external service of God, as the preaching of God's Word, hearing, reading, and meditating on the same, to the end we may make proof of our faith ; the contrary is the despising of God's Word and the outward service of God, as the Holy Sacra-ments.

The duty of the Fifth Commandment is obe-dience towards parents, tutors, and magistrates in those things which are not against God ; the con-trary is disobedience and rebellion.

The duty of the Sixth Commandment is meek-ness, not to be desirous of revenge, not to bear malice ; against this is tyranny, rage, hatred, envy, &c.

The duty of the Seventh Commandment is con-tinency and chastity ; against the same is lasci-viousness, immodest behaviour, adultery, &c.

The duty of the Eighth Commandment is to do

good, to give and lend willingly, to be liberal ; the contrary is covetousness, stealing, usury, fraud, and to wrong in trading and dealing.

The duty of the Ninth Commandment is to love the truth, not to backbite and slander, to speak well of all men ; the contrary is lying, backbiting, and to speak evil of another.

The duty of the Tenth Commandment is righteousness, to let every one possess his own ; the contrary is to be miserable and unjust.

The duty of this Commandment is to be without all covetous desires in the heart, to be content with that which one hath ; against that are the lustings of the heart. St. Paul saith the end of the Commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.

BRIEF SENTENCES OF THE CATECHISM, ACCORDING  
AS LUTHER USED TO TEACH AND INSTRUCT HIS  
FAMILY AT HOME.

*Of the Ten Commandments of God.*

As the Faith is, so is also God.

God stayeth not quite away, though he stayeth long.

Despair maketh Priests and Friars.

God careth and provideth for us, but we must labour.

God will have the heart only and alone.

Idolatry is the imagination of the heart.

God giveth by creatures.

God's Word placeth before our eyes the world, to the end we may see what a fine spark it is.

God's Word is our sanctification, and maketh every-  
thing happy.

Works of obedience must highly be regarded.

All that govern are called Fathers.

Shepherds of Souls are worthy of double honour.

Magistrates belong not to the fifth Commandment.

Wrath is forbidden in every man, except in the magistrates.

All occasions of death are forbidden.

Matrimony proceedeth freely in every state and calling.

Matrimony is necessary and commanded.

Matrimony forbidden and disallowed is against God's command.

Matrimony is a blessed state, and pleasing to God.

To steal is what one taketh unjustly.

Unfaithfulness is also stealing.

Thieving is the most common trade in the world.

Great thieves go scot-free, as the Pope and his crew.

Falseness and covetousness prosper not.

Backbiting is meddling with God's judgment.

Censuring, and to speak evil behind one's back, belongeth only to the magistrates.

We must censure and reprove no man behind his back.

We must judge charitably in everything.

There are no good works without the Ten Commandments.

To fear God, and to trust in him, is the fulfilling of all the Commandments.

The first Commandment driveth on all the rest.

*Of the Creed.*

The Creed teacheth to know God, and what a God we have.

In all cases we must make use of faith.

God giveth himself unto us with all creatures.

We must always drive on the article of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Ghost bringeth Christ home unto us ; he must reveal him.

Where the Holy Ghost preacheth not, there is no Church.

The works of the Holy Ghost are wrought continually.

*Of the Lord's Prayer.*

To pray is to call upon God in all need, which is made precious through God's command, and necessity stirreth up earnest and devout prayers, which are our weapons against the devil.

The devil, the world, and our flesh is against God's Will.

The devil hindereth and destroyeth the daily bread and all the gifts of God.

God careth for our bodies daily.

No man can live in the world without sin.

No man can bring his own righteousness before God.

We must forgive, as God forgiveth us.

To forgive our neighbour, assureth us fully that  
God hath forgiven us.

We are tempted three manner of ways—of the  
devil, of the world, and of our flesh.

Temptations serve against the secureness of our  
flesh.

Temptations are not overcome through our own  
strength.

The devil would hinder all that we pray for.

The devil goeth about to bring us into all manner  
of need.

*Of Baptism.*

Faith is annexed to Baptism.

Faith must have before it some external thing.

Faith maketh the person worthy.

Baptism is not our work, but God's.

Baptism is right, although no man believeth.

No man must build upon his faith.

Unbelief weakeneth not God's Word.

*Of the Lord's Supper.*

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is of God's ordaining.

The Word maketh a Sacrament.

Christ in the Sacrament is spiritual food for the soul.

Remission of sins is obtained only through the Word.

Faith receiveth the forgiveness of sins.

The Sacrament consisteth not in our worthiness.

Faith and human understanding are one against another.

Faith dependeth on the Word.

As we hold of Christ, even so we have him.

Faith is a Christian's treasure.

The Gospel is the power of God.

*Good Works.*

Good works are nameless.

A Christian's work standeth for the good of the neighbour.

Faith in Christ destroyeth sin.

The Holy Scriptures only give comfort; they forbid  
not good works.

Christ is a general good.

Christians do pray for and desire the last Day of  
Judgment.

The Church heareth none but Christ.

Christ is of a mean estate and small repute.

In adversities we should show ourselves like men,  
and pluck up good spirits.

Our whole life should be manly; we should fear  
God and put our trust in him.

Faith maketh us Christ's heritage.

We should aim at celestial honour, and not regard  
the contemning of men.

Christ spareth us out of mere grace through the  
Word.

The Gospel is altogether joyful.

Grace condemneth all people's own righteousness.

Salvation is purchased and given unto us without  
our deserts.

Regeneration is the work only of the Holy  
Ghost.

Human reason cannot comprehend nor understand the goodness and benefits of God.

Good works are the seals and proofs of faith ; for, even as a letter must have a seal to strengthen the same, even so faith must have good works.

Faith hath regard to the Word, and not to the Preacher.

The Preacher and the Word are two Persons.

This natural life is a little piece of the life everlasting.

Own imaginations and conceits spoil all things.

The Gospel cometh of God, it sheweth Christ, and requireth Faith.

The Gospel is a light in the world, which lighteneth mankind, and maketh children of God.

False Preachers are worse than deflowerers of virgins.

Righteousness is obtained through faith, and not through works. Works make faith strong.

A Preacher is made good through temptations.

A Prince is venison in heaven.

A person must be good before his works can be good.

We must not be dejected, but believe and pray.  
No State or Calling is of any value to make one  
good before God.

Faith endureth no human traditions in the con-  
science.

The Saints oftentimes erred like men.

We must distinguish offices from the persons.

We hate punishment, but we love sin.

God preserveth the sanctified, yea, even in the  
midst of errors.

No great Saint lived without errors.

A Christian's life consisteth of three points—of  
faith, love, and the cross.

We command a Christian in nothing, he is only  
admonished.

We must curb ourselves in our own wills and  
minds.

All revenge among Christians is taken away ; they  
must grow up and increase in the fruits of the  
spirit, among which love is the greatest, for she  
goeth about with the people.

Human reason comprehendeth not, nor under-  
standeth that Christ is our brother.

Christ is given unto us that believe with all his benefits and works.

Christ cometh unto us by preaching, so that he is in the midst of us.

Without the Cross we cannot attain to glory.

The Gospel cannot be truly preached without offence and tumult.

The Holy Ghost maketh one not instantly complete, but he must grow and increase.

We lose nothing by the Gospel, therefore we should venture thereupon all we have.

To believe the Gospel, delivereth from sins.

Works belong to the neighbour, faith to God.

Those that censure and judge others, condemn themselves.

Such as is the Faith, such is also the benefit.

To doubt is sin and everlasting death.

We know Christ when he himself is a schoolmaster in our hearts, and breaketh bread unto us.

God's Word kindleth Faith in the heart.

Faith is to build certainly on God's mercy.

Christ requireth no seeming godliness, no hypocrisy nor dissembling, but the godliness of the heart.

We are saved merely by grace and mercy, if we trust thereupon, but God must alter our hearts.  
The Law is nothing but a looking-glass.  
Christ carrieth us upon his back before his Father.  
Love regardeth not unthankfulness.

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### OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

*That we ought to beware of Sophistry.*

If, said Luther, we diligently mark the world and the course thereof, we shall find that it is governed merely by weenings or conceits, *Mundus regitur opinionibus*. Therefore sophistry, hypocrisy, and tyranny do rule and have the government in the world.

The upright, pure, and clear Divine Word must be their handmaid, and be by them controlled ; this the world will have. Therefore let us beware of sophistry, which consisteth not only in a double tongue, in doubtful and screwed words, which may be construed any way, but also it blossometh, and flourisheth in all arts and vocations ; it will like-

wise have room and place in religion ; it hath usurped and got a fine painted colour, under the name of holy writ.

Nothing is more pernicious or hurtful than Sophistry ; every one knoweth it not ; moreover, we are by nature prone and willing to believe lies rather than the truth. Few people do know what an evil sophistry is. Plato, the Heathen writer, made thereof a wonderful definition. For my part, said Luther, I compare it with a lie, which is like to a snowball, the longer it is rolled the greater it becomes.

Therefore I do not approve of such persons as do pervert everything, do under-value and find fault with other men's opinions, although they be good and sound ; I like not such brains which can dispute on both sides, and yet conclude nothing certain. Such sophistications, said Luther, are nothing but crafty and subtle inventions and contrivances to cozen and deceive people.

But I like and love an honest and a well-affected mind, that seeketh after truth simply and plainly, not to go about with plantasies and cheating tricks.

*Whether we should preach only of God's Grace and Mercy, or not.*

Philip Melancthon demanded of Luther whether the opinion of Calixtus were to be approved of, namely, that the Gospel of God's Grace ought to be continually preached. For thereby, doubtless, said Melancthon, people would grow worse and worse. Luther answered him and said: We must preach *Gratiam*, notwithstanding, because Christ hath commanded it. And although we long and often preach of grace, yet when people are at the point of death they know but little thereof. Nevertheless we must also drive on with the Ten Commandments in due time and place.

The ungodly, said Luther, out of the Gospel do suck only a carnal freedom, and become worse thereby; therefore not the Gospel, but the Law belongeth to them. Even as when my little son John offendeth: if then I should not whip him, but call him to the table unto me, and give him sugar and plums, thereby, indeed, I should make him worse, yea, should quite spoil him.

The Gospel is like a fresh, mild, and cool air in the extreme heat of summer, that is, a solace and comfort in the anguish of the conscience. But as this heat proceedeth from the rays of the sun, so likewise the terrifying of the conscience must proceed from the preaching of the Law, to the end we may know that we have offended against the Laws of God.

Now, said Luther, when the mind is refreshed and quickened again by the cool air of the Gospel, then we must not be idle, lie down and sleep; that is, when our consciences are settled in peace, quieted and comforted through God's spirit, then we must show also and prove our faith by such good works which God hath commanded. But so long as we live in this vale of misery, we shall be plagued and vexed with flies, with beetles, and with vermin, &c., that is, with the devil, with the world, and with our own flesh; yet we must press through, and not suffer ourselves to recoil.

See p. 133 *Against the Opposers of the Law.*

↓ I do much condemn, said Luther, the Antinomians, who, void of all shame, reject the doctrine of the Law, whereas the same is both necessary and profitable. But they see not the effect, the need, and the fruit thereof. St. Austin did picture the strength, the office and operation of the Law, by a very fit similitude, namely, that it discovereth our sins, and God's wrath against sin, and placeth them in our sight ; for the Law is not in fault, but our evil and wicked nature, even as a heap of lime is still and quiet until water be poured thereon, but then it beginneth to smoke and to burn, not that it is the fault of the water, but it is the nature and kind of the lime, which will not endure water ; but if oil be poured upon it, then it lieth still and burneth not. Even so it is with the Law and Gospel. It is an exceedingly fair similitude.

*Of the Children's Faith.*

The little children, said Luther, do stand on the best terms with God Almighty concerning their

lives and faith. We old doting fools do torment ourselves and have sorrow of heart with our disputings touching the Word, whether it be true or not : " How can it be possible ? " &c. But the children with simple pure faith do hold the same to be certain and true, without all doubting.

Now, if we intend to be saved, we must, according to their example, give ourselves only to the Word. But the wicked and crafty spirit, before we be aware, can, master-like, draw the same away from us, by presenting new dealings and business to keep us in action. Therefore best it were for us soon to die, and to be covered over with shovels.

The loving children do live innocently, they know of no sins, they are without malice, wrath, covetousness, and unbelief, &c. Therefore they are merry and possess a good conscience ; they fear no danger, whether wars, pestilence, or death.

They will take an apple rather than a crown ; what they hear concerning Christ, of the life to come, &c., the same do they believe simply and plainly, and prattle joyfully thereof. From whence Christ speaketh unto us old ones earnestly to follow

their examples, where he saith, “ Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.” For the children believe aright, and Christ loveth them with their childish sports. On the contrary, he is an enemy to the wisdom of the world (Matt. xi.).

*Of an Example of Faith in the Time of Dearth.*

At Eisleben, said Luther, I was well acquainted with a godly matron, who, in the time of the last dearth, with two children, had suffered extreme want and need. Now, when she had spent all her provision, and had nothing more to live upon, she trimmed herself with her children, and went towards a well or fountain to drink. In her going she prayed that God would be pleased to preserve and keep her in that fierce time of dearth. Upon the way a man met her, questioned and disputed with her whether she thought to get something to eat at the fountain. She said, “ Yea, why not? for all things are possible to God and easy to be done; he that fed the great multitude of the people of Israel forty years with manna in the wilderness, he can

also preserve me and mine with drinking of water." Now, as she remained steadfast in that mind, the man said unto her, "Behold! seeing thou art so confident in faith, go home, and thou shalt find three bushels of meal," &c. And according to the man's word, so she found it.

*That Faith is the only Rule in Divinity.*

There is but one only rule and article in divinity. He that knoweth not well the same is no divine: namely, upright faith and confidence in Christ. Out of this article all the others do flow and issue forth, and without this article the others are nothing. The devil, said Luther, hath opposed this article from the beginning of the world, and would long since willingly have rooted it out, and instead thereof have laughed in his fist. Sorrowful, broken, tormented, and vexed hearts, said Luther, do well relish this article, and they only understand the same.

*Of the Consequences of Faith.*

Believest thou? then thou wilt speak boldly. {  
Speakest thou boldly? then thou must suffer.

Sufferest thou ? then thou shalt be comforted. For, said Luther, faith, the confession thereof, and the cross do follow one after another.

*That the Enemies of the Gospel must bear Witness to the Doctrine of Faith, that thereby we only are justified before God.*

John Frederick, Prince Elector of Saxony, told me himself, said Luther, that as Prince John, the eldest son of Prince George, was near the time of his death, he desired to receive the communion under both kinds. But when his father was informed thereof, he caused an Austin Friar to be called to his son, to give him good instructions for his soul's health, and to advise him to receive the Sacrament *sub una specie*, or under one kind, and that he should tell his son he was the same Friar who was privately acquainted with Martin Luther, and was very conversant with him ; and, the better to make the Prince believe him, the Friar said that Luther himself lately had advised certain persons to receive the communion under one kind. Now, when this good and godly Prince was thus pitifully

induced to give credit to the Friar's false information, he then received the communion under one kind.

But when the Prince, his father, saw that his son drew near to his last gasp, and must needs die, then he comforted his son with the article of justification by faith in Christ, and put him in mind to have regard only to the Saviour of the world, and utterly to forget all his own works and deserts, and also that he should banish out of his heart the invocating of the saints.

Now, when the son in his conscience felt great solace and comfort by these his father's admonitions, he asked his father why he did not cause the same comfortable doctrine to be preached openly through all his countries. His father answered and said, "Loving child, we must say thus only to those that are dying, and not to the sound and healthful."

Whereupon, said Luther, I told the Prince Elector that his Highness might perfectly discern how wilfully our adversaries do oppose the known truth. Albert, Bishop of Mentz, and Prince

George do know and confess that our doctrine is according to God's Word, and yet, because it proceedeth not from the Pope, they refuse it; but their own consciences do strike them down to the ground, therefore, said Luther, I fear them not.

*Of the Love towards the Neighbour.*

The love towards the neighbour, said Luther, must be like a pure and chaste love between bride and bridegroom, where all faults are connived at, covered, and borne with, and only their virtues regarded.

Respecting ceremonies and ordinances, the kingdom of love must have the precedence and govern, and not tyranny. It must be a willing love, and not a halter love; it must altogether be directed and construed for the good and profit of the neighbour; and the greater he be that doth govern, the more, said Luther, he ought to serve according to love.

*Of that Sentence, “ Give, and it shall be given unto you.”*

This is a true speech which maketh people poor and rich ; it is that which maintaineth my house. I ought not to boast, said Luther, but I well know what I give in the year. If my gracious lord and master, the Prince Elector, should give a gentleman two thousand guilders, yet he should hardly maintain my housekeeping one year, and I have but three hundred guilders pension per annum ; yet God giveth sufficient and blesseth it.

There is in Austria a monastery which in former time was very rich, and remained rich so long as it willingly gave to the poor ; but when it ceased in giving, then it became poor, and is so to this day. It fell out that, not long since, a poor man came thither and desired alms, which was denied. The poor man demanded the cause why they refused to give for God's sake. The porter belonging to the monastery answered and said, “ We are become poor ;” whereupon the poor man said, “ The cause

of your poverty is this : ye have had in this monastery two brethren ; the one ye have thrust out, and the other is gone secretly away of himself. For after the one brother, 'Give' (*Date*), was put out and cashiered, so hath the other brother, 'So shall be given' (*Dabitur*), also lost himself."

And indeed the world is bound to help the neighbour three manner of ways—with giving, lending, and selling. But no man giveth, but robbeth, scrapeth, and draweth all to himself ; would willingly take and steal, but give nothing ; neither will any man lend but upon usury. No man selleth but he over-reacheth his neighbour, therefore *Dabitur* is gone, and our Lord God will bless no more so riehly. Beloved, said Luther, he that intendeth to have anything, the same must also give ; a liberal hand was never in want nor empty.

*That giving must be done with a free Heart, without expecting a Requital.*

In an evening, Luther, walking abroad to take the air, gave alms to the poor. Doctor Jonas, being

with him, gave also something, and said, “Who knoweth whether God will give it me again or no ?” Whereat Luther, smiling, answered him and said, “ You speak as if God had not given you this which you have now given to the poor. We must give freely and willingly.”

*Of the expounding of the Prophet Isaiah's Speech :*

*“ In Quietness and in Confidence shall be your Strength.”*

This sentence was expounded by Luther in this way : If thou intendest to vanquish the greatest, the most abominable and wickedest enemy, who is able to do thee mischief both in body and soul, and against whom thou preparest all sorts of weapons, but canst not overcome, then know that there is a sweet and loving physical herb which serveth for the same, and that herb is named *Patientia*.

But thou wilt say, “ How may I attain to this physic ? ” Answer—Take unto thee faith, who saith, “ No creature can do me mischief without the will of God.” Now, in case thou receivest hurt and mischief by thine enemy, the same is done

by the sweet and gracious will of God, in such sort that the enemy hurteth himself a thousand times more. From hence floweth unto me, a Christian, the love which saith, “I will, instead of the evil which mine enemy doth unto me, do him all the good I can ; I will heap coals of fire upon his head.” This, said Luther, is the Christian armour and weapon, wherewith to beat and overcome those enemies that seem to be like huge mountains. In a word, love teacheth to suffer and endure all things.

*Of Comfort against Envy.*

A certain honest and God-fearing man at Wittenberg lately told me, said Luther, he lived peaceably with every one, hurt no man, but was still and quiet ; yet notwithstanding, said he, many people were enemies unto him. I comforted him in this manner, and said : Arm yourself with patience, and give them no cause of envy. I pray, what cause do we give the devil ? What aileth him to be so great an enemy unto us ? but only because he hath not that which God hath. I know

none other cause of his vehement hatred towards us. Therefore when God giveth thee to eat, then eat ; when he causeth thee to fast, have patience ; giveth he honour, take it ; hurt or shame, endure it ; casteth he thee into prison, murmur not ; will he make thee a lord, follow him : casteth he thee down again, so care thou not for it, nor regard it.

*That Patience is necessary in every Particular.*

I, said Luther, must have patience with the Pope ; I must have patience with heretics and seducers ; I must have patience with the roaring courtiers ; I must have patience with my servants ; I must have patience with Kate my wife ; to conclude, the patiences are so many, that my whole life is nothing but patience. The Prophet Isaiah saith, “In being silent and hoping consisteth our strength ;” that is, have patience under sufferings : hope, and despair not.

## OF PRAYER.

*What Power Prayer hath.*

No human creature can believe, said Luther, how powerful prayer is, and what is it able to effect, but only those that have learned it by experience.

It is a great matter when in extreme need, as then one can take hold on prayer. I know, as often as I have earnestly prayed, that I have been richly heard, and have obtained more than I prayed for ; indeed, God sometimes deferred, but notwithstanding he came.

Ecclesiasticus saith, “ The prayer of a good and godly Christian availeth more to health, than the physician’s physic.”

O how great and upright and godly Christian’s prayer is ! how powerful with God ; that a poor human creature should speak with God’s high majesty in heaven, and not be affrighted, but, on the contrary, knoweth that God smileth upon him for Christ’s sake, his dearly beloved Son. The heart and conscience, in this act of praying, must

not fly and recoil backwards by reason of our sins and unworthiness, and must not stand in doubt, nor be scared away. We must not do, said Luther, as the Bavarian did, who with great devotion called upon St. Leonard, an idol, set up in a church in Bavaria, behind which idol stood one who answered the Bavarian and said, “Fie on thee, Bavarian”; and in that sort often-times was repulsed, and could not be heard: at last, the Bavarian went away, and said, “Fie on thee, Leonard.”

But when we pray, we must not let it come to, fie upon thee; but must certainly hold, conclude, and believe, that we are already heard in that for which we pray with faith in Christ. Therefore the ancients finely described prayer, namely, that it is, *Ascensus mentis ad Deum*, a climbing up of the heart unto God, that is, lifteth itself up, crieth and sigheth to God: neither I myself, said Luther, nor any other that I know, have rightly understood the definition of this *Ascensus*. Indeed, we have boasted and talked much of the climbing up of the heart; but we failed in *Syntaxi*, we could not

bring thereunto the word *Deum*; nay, we flew from God, we were afraid to draw near unto him, and to pray through Christ, in whom the strength of prayer wholly consisteth; we always prayed in Popedom *conditionaliter*, conditionally, and therefore uncertainly.

But let us pray in heart, and also with our lips; for prayer, by our loving God, supporteth the world; otherwise, without prayer, it would stand in a far more lamentable state.

*Of the Power of Prayer, and of the Lord's Prayer.*

Our Saviour Christ, said Luther, most excellently, and with very few words, comprehended, in the Lord's Prayer, all things both needful and necessary; but without trouble, trials, and vexations, prayer cannot rightly be made. Therefore God saith, "Call on me in the time of trouble," &c., without trouble it is only a cold prattling, and goeth not from the heart; the common saying is "Need teacheth to pray." And although the Papists say that God well understandeth all the

words of those that pray, yet St. Bernard is far of another opinion, where he saith, “God heareth not the words of one that prayeth, unless he that prayeth heareth them first himself.” The Pope is a mere tormentor of the conscience. The assembly of his greased and religious crew in praying was altogether like the croaking of frogs, which edified nothing at all. It was mere sophistry, and deceiving, fruitless, and unprofitable.

Prayer is a strong wall, and a fort of the church ; it is a godly Christian’s weapon, which no man knoweth nor findeth, but only he who hath the spirit of grace and of prayer.

The three first petitions in our Lord’s prayer do comprehend such great and celestial things, that no heart is able to search them out. The fourth petition containeth the whole policy and economy, or the temporal and house-government, and all things necessary for this life. The fifth prayer striveth and fighteth against our own evil consciences, against original and actual sins, which trouble the same, &c. Truly they were penned by wisdom itself; none but God could have done the like.

We cannot pray without faith in Christ the Mediator. The Turks, the Jews, and the ungodly may rehearse and speak the words of prayer after one, but they cannot pray. And although the Apostles were taught this prayer by Christ, and prayed often, yet they prayed not as they should have prayed: for Christ saith, "Hitherto ye have not prayed in my name;" whereas, doubtless, they had prayed much, and spoken the words. But when the Holy Ghost came, then they prayed aright in the name of Christ. If praying and reading of prayer be but only a bare work, as the Papists hold it to be, then the righteousness of the law is nothing worth. The upright prayer of a godly Christian is a strong hedge, as God himself saith, "And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none," &c. Therefore, said Luther, when others do blaspheme, let us pray. David saith, "He doth the will of them that fear Him, and heareth their prayers."

*That we must daily go on in Praying.*

I, said Luther, have every day enough to do to pray. And when I lay me down to rest, I pray the Lord's Prayer, and afterwards take hold on two or three sentences out of the Bible, and so betake myself to sleep, then I am well satisfied.

*That Preachers ought to join their Prayers together.*

Dr. Aepinus, Superintendent of Hambrough, coming to Wittemberg to speak with Luther, who, after his dispatch, and at his taking leave, said, I commend myself and our church at Hambrough to your prayers. Luther answered him, and said, Loving Aepine, the cause is not ours, but God's: let us join our prayers together, as then the cause will be holpen. I will pray against the Pope and the Turk as long as I live: and I like it well that you take such course at Hambrough, earnestly to pray against Mahomet and the Pope.

*Of the Power of Prayer.*

God always giveth more than we pray for; when we truly pray for a piece of bread, so giveth God

a whole acre of land. When my wife, said Luther, was sick, I prayed to God that she might live, so he not only granted that request, but also therewith he hath given us a goodly farm at Zold-dorf, and hath blessed us with a fruitful year. At that time my wife said unto me, Sir ! how is it, that in Popedom they pray so often with great vehemence, but we are very cold and careless in praying ? I answered her, the devil driveth on his servants continually ; they are diligent, and take great pains in their false worshipping, but we, indeed, are ice cold therein, and negligent.

*Of Luther's Prayer for a gracious Rain.*

In the year 1532, throughout all Germany was a great drought, the corn in the fields in a lamentable way began to wither. On the ninth of June the same year, Luther called together the whole assembly into the church, and directed his prayer, with deep sighs, to God in the manner following : "O Lord, behold our prayers for thy promise sake ; we have prayed, and our hearts have sighed, but the covetousness of the rich farmers doth hinder

and hem in thy blessing ; for seeing that through thy gospel they are unbridled, they think it free for them to live and do what they please ; they now fear neither death nor hell, but say, 'I believe, therefore I shall be saved ;' they become haughty spiteful Mammonists, and accursed covetous cut-throats, that suck out land and people. Moreover, also, the usurers among the gentry in every place deal wickedly, insomuch, as it seemeth, thou, O God, wilt now visit us, together with them, with the rod ; yet, nevertheless, thou hast still means whereby to maintain those that are thine, although thou sufferest no rain to fall among the ungodly."

After he had said thus, he lifted up his eyes towards heaven, and said, "Lord God, thou hast through the mouth of thy servant David said, 'The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him faithfully ; he doth the will of those that fear him, and heareth their prayers, and helpeth them in their distress.' How is it, Lord, that thou givest no rain, seeing we have cried and prayed so long unto thee ? 'Thy will be done,' O Lord ! we

know that although thou givest not rain, yet, notwithstanding, thou wilt give us something better, a still, a quiet, and a peaceable life. Now we pray, O Lord, from the bottom of our hearts. If thou, O Lord, wilt not be pleased to hear and give us rain, then the ungodly will say, Christ thy only Son is a liar. For he saith, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye pray the Father in my name, the same he will give unto you,' &c. Inso-much that they will give thy Son the lie. I know, O Lord, that we do cry unto thee from our hearts, with yearning and sighing, why then dost thou not hear us?" Now, even the same day, and within the space of half an hour after the people went from church, it began to rain so sweet and mildly, which continued for a whole fortnight, so that the grounds thereby were changed and refreshed in a most miraculous manner. This happened June 9, 1532.

*Of Papistical Prayer.*

The praying in Popedom, is a mere tormenting of the consciences, it is only a prating and tongue-threshing, no praying, but a work of obedience.

From thence proceeded a confused sea-full of *Horas Canonicas*, the howling and babbling in cells and monasteries, where they read and sang the psalms and collects without all spiritual devotion, insomuch that they neither understood the words, sentences, nor the meaning.

In what manner, and how I tormented myself, said Luther, with those *Horis Canonicas* before the Gospel came, which, by reason of many businesses I often intermitted, I am not able to express. On the Saturdays I used to lock myself up in my cell, and accomplish what the whole week I had neglected. But at last I was troubled with so many affairs, that I was fain oftentimes to omit also my Saturday's devotions. At length, when I saw that Amsdorff and others derided such manner of devotion, then I quite left it off.

It was a great torment, from which we are now delivered by the Gospel. Although, said Luther, I had done no more but only freed people from that torment, yet they might well give me thanks for it. Innumerable laws and works were taught and imposed upon people without the spirit, as in

the book, *Rationale Divinorum*, many abominable things are written.

*To Pray for Peace.*

Luther receiving a letter written unto him, from the Imperial Assembly, by Philip Melancthon, after the reading of it, he said, What Philip Melancthon writeth hath hands and feet, hath authority and gravity, it is of weight, contained in a few words, as always I have found by his letters. But, I perceive, we must have wars; for the Papists would willingly go on, but they want a good stomach, neither may we endure the case to stand upon these terms. Let it therefore proceed *in nomine Domini*; I will commit all things to God, and will be *Crito* in the play. I will pray that God would convert our adversaries. We have a good cause on our side. Who would not fight and venture body and blood, *pro Sacris*, for the Holidom, which is God's Word? And, besides, the temporal laws and statutes of policy do also concur and agree with our proceedings; for we always have desired and called for peace, but our

Princes are provoked and drawn to defend themselves and their subjects, and of necessity must resist their power ; our adversaries will not suffer us to live in peace. This letter, said Luther, was written ten days since ; by this time it is concluded what shall be done. The everlasting merciful God give His grace thereunto ! Let us watch and pray, for Satan sleepeth not.

*Of Temporal Peace.*

Worldly and outward peace is one of the highest gifts of God ; but we abuse it too much ; every one liveth after his own will and pleasure, against God and the Magistrate. Oh, how soundly will our gentry and farmers, in Germany, pay for this before one hundred and fifty years come to an end, as already they have done in Hungary and in Austria ; but afterwards God will restore them again, and beat down Popedom. Let us not cease to pray.

*Of Unity and Concord.*

Through concord small things and wealth do increase, as the Heathen said ; but dissension is

dangerous and hurtful, especially in schools, in professions, high arts, and in the professors thereof, wherein the one ought to reach the hand to the other—should kiss and embrace each other. But when we bite and devour one another, then let us take heed lest we be swallowed up together. Therefore let us pray and strive ; for the word of faith, and the prayers of the just, are the most powerful weapons ; moreover, God himself sendeth his holy angels round about them that fear him. We ought valiantly to fight, for we are under a Lord of Hosts, and a Prince of War ; therefore with one hand we must build, and in the other hand take the sword—that is, we must both teach and resist.

It is now time to watch, for we are the mark they shoot at ; our adversaries intend to make a confederacy with the Turk ; they aim at us, we must venture it ; for Antichrist will war and get the victory against the saints of God, as Daniel saith. We, said Luther, stand outwardly in the greatest danger, by reason of treachery and treason ; the Papists endeavour with money to

grease and corrupt our captains and officers. An ass laden with money may do anything, as Cornelius Tacitus writeth of us Germans ; we have taught them to take money ; there is neither fidelity nor truth on earth.

*Of the Power of Prayer.*

The prayer of the heart, said Luther, and the sighs of the poor and oppressed, do make such an alarum and cry in heaven, that God and all the angels must hear the same. O, our Lord God hath a sharp listening ear.

*Of the Sighing of the Heart.*

When Moses, with the children of Israel, came to the Red Sea, then he cried with trembling and quaking, yet he opened not his mouth, neither was his voice heard on earth by the people : doubtless, said Luther, he cried and sighed in his heart, and said, "Ah, Lord God ! what course shall I now take ? Which way shall I now turn myself ? How am I come to this strait ? No help nor counsel can save us : before us is the sea ; behind us are

our enemies the Egyptians ; on both sides high and huge mountains ; I am the cause that all this people shall now be destroyed," &c. Then answered God, and said, " Wherefore criest thou unto me ? " As if God should say, " What an alarum, a shrieking, and a loud crying dost thou make, that the whole heavens must ring therewith ! " &c. But, alas ! said Luther, we read such examples as dead letters ; human reason is not able to search this passage out. The way through the Red Sea is full as broad, and wider far (if not further) than Wittenberg lieth from Coburg, that is thirty Dutch miles, 120 English at least : doubtless the people were constrained in the night season to rest, to bait and eat therein ; for six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, would require a good time to pass through, although they went one hundred and fifty in rank and file.

*God's hearing Prayer.*

It is impossible that God should not hear the prayers which with faith are made in Christ, although God giveth not according to the measure,

manner, and time which we dictate unto him ; he will not be tied. In such sort dealt God with the mother of St. Austin. She prayed to God that her son Austin might be converted, but, as yet, it would not be ; then she ran to the learned, entreating them to persuade and advise him thereunto. At last, she propounded unto him a marriage with a Christian virgin, that thereby he might be drawn back, and brought to the Christian faith ; but all would not do as yet. But when our Lord God came thereto, he came to purpose, and made of him such an Austin, that he became a great light to the Church. St. James saith, “ Pray one for another, for the prayer of the righteous availeth much,” &c. Prayer, said Luther, is a powerful thing ; for God hath bound and tied himself thereunto. Christ taught the Lord’s Prayer according to the manner of the Jews—that is, he directed it only to the Father ; whereas they that pray in the same manner, are heard for the Son’s sake. This was done because Christ would not be praised before his death.

*Of the Power of Prayer.*

As the King of Persia, said Luther, laid siege to the city Nasili, the bishop that was therein saw that he was too weak (by man's help) to defend the city against so mighty a king ; wherefore he went upon the wall, lifted up his hands to Heaven, and prayed, in the sight of his enemies. Whereupon immediately the eyes of the horses in the whole army in such sort were pestered with an innumerable multitude of flies stinging them, that with their riders they ran away, and so raised the siege, whereby the city was preserved. In such a manner could God divert the wicked enterprises of the Papists against us, if we would diligently pray.

*That a True Christian Prayeth Always.*

The prayers of upright Christians are without ceasing ; though they pray not always with their mouth, yet their hearts do pray continually, sleeping and waking ; for the sigh of a true Christian is a prayer. As the Psalm saith, “ Because of the deep sighing of the poor, I will up, saith the Lord,”

&c. In like manner a true Christian always carrieth the cross, though he feeleth it not always.

*Of the Strength of the Lord's Prayer.*

The Lord's Prayer, said Luther, bindeth the People together, and knitteth them one to another, insomuch that one prayeth for another, and together one with another ; and it is so strong and powerful that it even driveth away the fear of death.

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OF THE CONFESSION AND CONSTANCY  
OF THE DOCTRINE.

The word and article of justification (how we are justified and saved before God) expelleth and overcometh all sorrow, all perplexities, misfortunes, and adversities ; and without this article there is neither help nor advice.

We read in the histories of the Church, said Luther, that Julian the Emperor forced his servants and soldiers to deny Christ ; but when many

of them refused to do the same, he caused them to be executed with the sword, and they went joyfully to their deaths. Among them was a proper youth, for whom earnest intercession was made, that he might be the first to die. But Julian commanded to release him, in order to try whether he would remain constant or no. Now, when he kneeled down and offered his neck to the block, the executioner was charged not to strike, but to let him rise again. Then the youth stood up, and said, "Ah, sweet Jesu ! am I not worthy to suffer for thy sake ?" These were words of a great faith, which overcometh the fear of death.

When governors and rulers are enemies to God's Word, then our duty is to depart, to sell and forsake all we have, to fly from one place to another, as Christ commandeth. We must make and prepare no uproars nor tumults by reason of the Gospel, but we must suffer all things.

*What Christ Requireth of us.*

Christ requireth nothing more of us, than that we should confess him, and speak freely and undauntedly of him. But here thou wilt say, "Yea, if I do so, then I shall be struck on the lips." Christ answereth thereunto, and saith, "Call upon me in the time of trouble, so I will hear thee, and thou shalt praise me." And "He shall call upon me, and I will hear him, yea, I am with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and bring him to honour," &c.

There is no lighter nor more easy work on earth than the upright and true service of God, to do what God commandeth in his Word; we should only believe and speak, but then certain it is that we shall suffer and be humbled with persecutions; but Christ hath promised to be with us, and to help us.

*That every Christian is Bound to Confess Christ.*

Every Christian, especially those in offices, should always be ready (when need requireth)

boldly to stand up and confess his Saviour Christ, to maintain his faith and always be armed against the world, the sectaries, the devil, and what else he were able to produce. But no man will do this, except he be so sure of his doctrine and religion, that, although I myself should play the fool, and should recant and deny this my doctrine and religion, which God forbid, he notwithstanding would not yield, but say, if Luther, or an angel from heaven, should teach otherwise, "Let him be accursed."

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### OF IMPERIAL DIETS.

*Of Imperial Diets and Assemblies in Causes of Religion.*

In the year 1518, the 9th of July, when I, said Luther, was cited and summoned, I came and appeared : Frederick Prince Elector of Saxony having appointed me a great and strong convoy and safe-conduct. I was warned in any case not to have conversation with the Italians, nor to

repose any trust or confidence in them. I was three whole days in Augsburg without the Emperor's safe-conduct. In the mean time, an Italian came unto me, and carried me to the Cardinal Cajetan ; and by the way he earnestly persuaded me to revoke and recant ; I should, said he, need to speak but only one word before the Cardinal, namely, *Revoco*, and then the Cardinal would recommend me to the Pope's favour so that with honour I might return safely again to my master, the Prince Elector. After three days the Bishop of Trier came, who, in the Emperor's name, showed and declared to the Cardinal my safe-conduct. Then I went unto him in all humility, fell down first upon my knees ; secondly, all along upon the ground ; thirdly, when I had remained awhile so lying, then the Cardinal three times bade me arise ; whereupon I stood up. This pleased him well, hoping I would consider, and better bethink myself.

The next day, when I came before him again, and would revoke nothing at all, then he said unto me, “ What ? thinkest thou that the Pope careth

for Germany? or dost thou think that the Princes will raise arms and armies to maintain and defend thee? Oh, no; where wilt thou remain in safety?" I said, Under Heaven. After this the Pope humbled himself, and wrote to our church, yea, he wrote even to the Prince Elector's chaplain, and to one of his counsellors, Spalatine and Pfeffinger, that they would surrender me into his hands, and procure that his pleasure and command might be put in execution. And the Pope wrote also to the Prince Elector himself after the following manner:

"Although, as touching my person, thou art to me unknown, yet I have seen thy father, Prince Ernestus, at Rome, who was altogether an obedient son to the Church; he visited and frequented our religion with great devotion, and held the same in highest honour. I wish and would that thy illustrious serenity would also tread in his footsteps," &c.

But the Prince Elector well marked the Pope's unaccustomed humility, and his evil conscience; he was also acquainted with the power and operation of the Holy Scriptures. Therefore he remained

where he was, and returned thanks to the Pope for his affection towards him.

My books, said Luther, in a short time went, yea, flew throughout Europe ; therefore the Prince Elector was confirmed and strengthened, insomuch that he utterly refused to execute the Pope's commands, but subjected himself under the acknowledgment of the Scriptures.

If the Cardinal had handled me with more discretion at Augsburg, and had dealt kindly with me when I fell at his feet, then it had never come thus far ; for at that time I saw very few of the Pope's errors which now I see. Had he been silent, so had I lightly held my peace. The style and custom of the Romish court in dark and confused cases, was this : that the Pope said, We by papal power do take these causes unto us ; we quench them out and destroy them. I am persuaded that the Pope willingly would give three Cardinals, on condition that it were still in that vessel wherein it was before he began to meddle with me.

*Of Luther's Journey and Proceedings at the  
Imperial Diet at Worms, Anno 1520.*

On Tuesday in the Passion week, said Luther, I was cited by the herald to appear at the Diet ; he brought with him a safe-conduct from the Emperor, and many other Princes, but the safe-conduct was soon broken, even the next day (Wednesday), at Worms, where I was condemned, and my books burned. Now, when I came to Erfurt, I received intelligence that I was cast and condemned at Worms, yea, and that in all cities and places thereabout it was published and spread abroad ; insomuch that the herald asked me, whether I meant to go to Worms, or no ?

Although I was somewhat astonished at the news, yet I answered the herald, and said, although in Worms there were as many devils as there are tiles on the houses, yet, God willing, I will go thither.

When I came to Oppenheim, in the Palatinate, not far from Worms, Bucer came unto me, and

dissuaded me from entering into the town ; for, said he, Sglapion, the Emperor's confessor, had been with him, and had entreated him to warn me not to go thither, for I should be burned ; but rather that I should go to a gentleman there near at hand, Francis Von Sickingen, and remain with him, who willingly would receive and entertain me. This plot the wicked wretches, said Luther, had devised against me, to the end I should not appear ; for if I had contracted the time, and staid away three days, then my safe-conduct had been expired, and then they would have locked the town-gates, and without hearing, I should have been condemned and made away. But I went on in all simplicity, and when I saw the city, I wrote presently to Spalatine, and gave him notice of my coming, and desired to know where I should be lodged. Then they all wondered at my coming, which was so far from their expectation ; for they verily thought I would have stayed away, as scared through their threatenings. There were two worthy gentlemen (John Von Hirschfeld, and St. John Schott), who received me by the

Prince Elector's command, and brought me to their lodgings.

No Prince came unto me, but only Earls and gentlemen, who earnestly looked upon me, and who had exhibited four hundred articles to his Imperial Majesty against those of the spirituality, and desired a redress and a removing of those their grievances, otherwise they themselves should be constrained to remedy the same ; from all which grievances they are now delivered through the Gospel, which I (God be praised) have brought again to light. The Pope at that time wrote to the Emperor, that he should not perform the safe-conduct ; for which end all the Bishops also pressed the Emperor ; but the Princes and States of the Empire would not consent thereunto : for they alleged that a great tumult thereupon would arise. I received of them a great deal of courtesy, insomuch that the Papists were more afraid of me than I was of them.

For the Landgrave of Hesse (being then but a young Prince) desired that I might be heard, and he said openly unto me, "Sir, is your cause just and

upright, then I beseech God to assist you." Now being in Worms, I wrote to Sglapian, and desired him to make a step unto me, but he would not. Then being called, I appeared in the Senate House before the Council and State of the whole Empire, where the Emperor, and the Princes Electors in person were assembled.

Then Dr. Eck (the Bishop of Trier's fiscal) began, and said unto me, "Martin, thou art called hither to give answer, whether thou acknowledgest these writings to be thy books or no?" (The books lay on a table which he showed unto me.) I answered and said, "I believe they be mine." But Hierome Schurfe presently thereupon said, "Let the titles of them be read." Now when the same were read, then I said, "Yea, they are mine." Then he said, "Will you revoke them?" I answered and said, "Most gracious Lord and Emperor, some of my books are books of controversies, wherein I touch my adversaries: some, on the contrary, are books of doctrine; the same I neither can nor will revoke. But if in case I have in my books of controversies been too violent against any man, then

I am content therein to be better directed, and for that end I desire respite of time." Then they gave me one day and one night. The next day I was cited by the Bishops and others, who were appointed to deal with me touching my revocation. Then I said, "God's Word is not my word, therefore I know not how to give it away; but in whatsoever is therein, besides the same, I will show obedience." Then Marquis Joachim said unto me "Sir Martin, so far as I understand, you are content to be instructed, excepting only what may concern the Holy Writ." I said, "Yea;" then they pressed me to refer the cause to His Imperial Majesty; I said, I durst not presume so to do. Then they said, "Do you not think that we are also Christians, who with all care and diligence would finish and end such causes? You ought to put so much trust and confidence in us, that we would conclude uprightly." To that I answered and said, "I dare not trust you so far, that you should conclude against yourselves, who even now have cast and condemned me, being under safe-conduct; yet, nevertheless, that ye may see what I will do, I

will yield up into your hands my safe-conduct, and do with me what ye please." Then all the Princes said, "Truly, he offereth enough, if not too much." Afterwards they said, "Yield unto us yet in some articles." I said, "In God's name, such articles as concern not the Holy Scriptures I will not stand against." Presently hereupon, two Bishops went to the Emperor, and showed him that I had revoked. Then the Emperor sent another Bishop unto me, to know if I had referred the cause to him, and to the Empire; I said, I had neither done it, nor intended so to do. In this sort, said Luther, did I alone resist so many, insomuch that my Doctor, and divers others of my friends, were much offended and vexed by reason of my constancy; yea, some of them said, if I had referred the articles to their consideration, they would have yielded, and given way to those articles which in the council at Costnitz had been condemned. Then came Cocleus upon me, and said, "Sir Martin, if you will yield up your safe-conduct, then I will enter into dispute with you." I, for my part, said Luther, in my simplicity, would

have accepted thereof. But Hieronimus Schurfe earnestly entreated me not to do the same, and in derision and scorn, answered Cocleus and said, "O brave offer, if a man were so foolish as to entertain it!"

Then came a Doctor unto me, belonging to the Marquis of Baden, essaying, with a strain of high-carried words, to move me, admonished me, and said: "Truly, Sir Martin, you are bound to do much, and to yield for the sake of fraternal love, and to the end that peace and tranquillity among the people may be preserved, lest tumults and insurrections should be occasioned and raised. Besides, it were also greatly befitting you to show obedience to the Imperial Majesty, and diligently to beware of causing offences in the world; therefore I would advise you to revoke." Whereupon, said Luther, I said: "For the sake of brotherly love and amity I could and would do much, so far as it were not against the faith and honour of Christ." When all these had made their vain assaults, then the Chancellor of Trier said unto me, "Martin Luther, you are disobedient to the Imperial

Majesty ; therefore you have leave and licence to depart again wit: your safe-conduct." In this sort I again departed from Worms with a great deal of gentleness and courtesy, to the wondering of the whole Christian world, insomuch that the Papists wished they had left me at home. After my departure, that abominable edict of proscribing was put in execution at Worms, which gave occasion to every man to revenge himself upon his enemies, under the name and title of Protestant heresy. But the tyrants, not long after, were constrained to recall the same again.

*Of the Imperial Diet at Augsburg, Anno 1530.*

The Imperial Diet held at Augsburg, 1530, is worthy of all praise ; for then and from thence came the Gospel among the people in other countries, contrary to the wills and expectations both of Emperor and Pope ; therefore, said Luther, what hath been spent there should be grievous to no man. God appointed the Imperial Diet at Augsburg, to the end the Gospel should be spread further abroad and planted. They over-climbed

themselves at Augsburg, for the Papists openly approved there of our doctrine. Before that Diet was held, the Papists had made the Emperor believe that our doctrine was altogether frivolous ; and when he came to the Diet, he should see that they would put us all to silence, insomuch that none of us should be able to speak a word in defence of our religion ; but it fell out far otherwise ; for we openly and freely confessed the Gospel before the Emperor and the whole Empire. And at that Diet we confounded our adversaries in the highest degree. The Imperial Diet at Augsburg was invaluable, by reason of the Confession of Faith, and of God's Word, which on our part was there performed : for there the adversaries were constrained to confess that our Confession was upright and true.

*Of the Confession and Apology which at Augsburg  
was exhibited to the Emperor.*

The Emperor, said Luther, censured understandingly and discreetly, and carried himself princely in this cause of religion ; he found our

Confession to be far otherwise than the Papists had informed him—namely, that we were most ungodly people, and led most wicked and detestable kind of lives ; and that we taught against the first and second tables of the Ten Commandments of God. For this cause, the Emperor sent our Confession and Apology to all the universities ; his council also delivered their opinions, and said : “ In case their doctrine were against the holy Christian faith, then they thought fitting that His Imperial Majesty should seek to suppress it with all his power. But if it be only against ceremonies and abuses (as now it appeareth to be) then to refer it to the consideration and censure of learned people,” &c. This, said Luther, was good and wise counsel.

Dr. Eck confessed openly, and said : “ The Protestants cannot be confuted and opposed out of Holy Scriptures.” Therefore the Bishop of Mainz said unto him, “ Oh, how finely our learned Divines do defend us and our doctrine ! ” “ The Bishop of Mainz,” said Luther, “ holdeth our doctrine to be upright and true, but he only courteth the Pope,

otherwise long before this time he would have played strange pranks with his Holiness."

*Of the Strength and Profit of the Confession and Apology of Augsburg.*

God's Word is powerful; the more it is persecuted the more and further it spreadeth itself abroad. Behold the Imperial Diet at Augsburg, which doubtless is the last trumpet before the dreadful Day of Judgment. How raged the world there against the Word! Oh, said Luther, how were we there fain to pray the Pope and Papists, that they would be pleased to permit and suffer Christ to live quietly in heaven! There our doctrine broke through into the light in such sort, that by the Emperor's strict command the same was sent to all Kings, Princes, and Universities. This our Doctrine forthwith enlightened many excellent people, dispersed here and there in Princes' courts, among whom some of God were chosen to take hold on this our doctrine, like unto tinder, and afterwards kindled the same also in others.

Our Apology and Confession with great honour came to light ; the Papists' confutations are kept in darkness, and do stink. Oh, said Luther, how willingly would I that their confutations might appear to the world ; then I would set upon that old torn and tattered skin, and in such sort would baste it, that the flitches thereof should fly about here and there ; but they shun the light. This time twelvemonths no man would have given a farthing for the Protestants, so sure the ungodly Papists were of us. For, said Luther, when my most gracious Lord and master, the Prince Elector of Saxony, before other Princes came to the Diet, the Papists marvelled much thereat, for they verily believed that he would not have appeared, by reason (as they imagined) his cause was too bad and foul to be brought before the light. But what fell out ? Even this, that in their greatest security they were overwhelmed with the greatest fear and affrightments. Because the Prince Elector, like an upright Prince, appeared so early at Augsburg, then the other Popish princes swiftly posted away from Augsburg to Innsbruck,

where they held serious counsel with Prince George and the Marquis of Baden, all of them wondering what the Prince Elector's so early approach to the Diet should mean, insomuch that the Emperor himself thereat was astonished, and doubted whether he might come and go in safety or not. Whereupon the princes were constrained to promise, that they would set up body, goods, and blood by the Emperor, the one offering to maintain 6,000 horse, another so many thousands of foot-soldiers, &c., to the end His Majesty might be the better secured. There was a wonder among wonders to be seen, in that God struck with fear and cowardliness the enemies of the truth. And although at that time the Prince Elector of Saxony was alone, and but only the hundredth sheep, while the others were ninety-and-nine, yet, notwithstanding, it so fell out that they all trembled and were afraid. Now when they came to the point, and began to take the business in hand, then there appeared but a very small heap that stood by God's Word.

But, said Luther, we brought with us a strong

and mighty King, a King above all Emperors and Kings, namely, Christ Jesus, the powerful Word of God. Then all the Papists cried out, and said, "Oh, it is insufferable that so small and silly a heap should set themselves against the Imperial power." But, said Luther, the Lord of Hosts frustrateth the councils of Princes. Pilate had power to put our blessed Saviour to death, but willingly he would not; Annas and Caiaphas willingly would have done it, but could not.

The Emperor, for his own part, is good and honest; but the Popish Bishops and Cardinals are undoubtedly knaves. And forasmuch as the Emperor now refuseth to bathe his hands in innocent blood, therefore the frantic Princes do bestir themselves, do scorn and contemn the good Emperor in the highest degree. The Pope also for anger is ready to burst in pieces, because the Diet, in this sort, without shedding of blood, should be dissolved; therefore he sendeth the sword to the Duke of Bavaria, to proceed therewith, and intendeth to take the crown from the Emperor's head, and to set it upon the head of Bavaria; but he shall not

accomplish it. In this manner ordered God the business, that Kings, Princes, yea, and the Pope himself, fell from the Emperor, and that we joined with him, which was a great wonder of God's providence, in that he whom the devil intended to use against us, even the same, God taketh, maketh, and useth for us. Oh, wonder, said Luther, above all wonders !

*Of the Assembly of the Princes at Brunswick, 1531.*

When the Princes (professing the Augustinian Confession) held an assembly at Brunswick, then Luther received three letters, wherein was shown that the Prince Elector of Saxony journeyed five days through the Marquisate of Brandenburg, whereas Prince Henry of Brunswick would neither give him convoy nor permit him to go through his country. But the Prince Elector of Brandenburg, in his country, gave him princely entertainment in every place, and many went out of Brunswick to meet and to receive him. But the Landgrave of Hessen went on the other side, through Goslar, without a convoy. Christianus, King of Denmark,

the second day of the assembly, delivered up the Confession of his Faith, and was held and esteemed a second David. Whereupon Luther said, God of his mercy assist him for the sanctifying of his name. But, said he, the pride of the Duke of Brunswick may easily redound to his own hurt and prejudice, who, contrary to all law and equity, denied a safe convoy to one of his best and truest friends. Moses likewise desired a safe convoy to the King of the Amorites ; but being denied, he thereby took occasion to raise war against him. The Lord of Heaven grant us peace. The same day other letters came to Luther from Brunswick, showing that the King of Denmark in person, the Ambassadors of England and France, and of many Imperial cities, were arrived there, among whom, some carried themselves very strangely towards those of the Protestant League. Luther said, under the name and colour of the Gospel, they seek their own particular advantages, but in the least danger they are afraid. These politic and terrestrial leagues and unions have no hand nor share in the Gospel : God alone preserveth and defendeth the same in

times of persecution. Let us put trust and confidence in him, and with him; let us erect and establish an everlasting league, for the world is the world, and will remain the world.

*Of the Convention and Assembly of the Protestant State at Frankfort-on-the-Main, 1539.*

God, of his infinite mercy, said Luther, assist them at Frankfort-on-the-Main, that they may Christian-like consult and conclude, to the end that God's honour, the good and profit of the commonwealth may be furthered. Indeed, it is a very small assembly; it hath a strange aspect to be held in an Imperial city; but forasmuch as they are thereunto constrained by the adversaries, they must be content.

The Papists, void of shame, do unwisely undertake to possess themselves of the cities, and by fraud to draw thereunto their adherents; then they make show of keeping peace, but in the meantime they contrive how to separate and confuse the whole body, and of the members to make a massacre; they secretly fall upon Hamburg,

upon Minden, and Frankfort. They might more wisely go to work, if by open wars they assailed us. At Augsburg they openly condemned us; and if those of our party had not been patient, it had presently gone on at that time. Anno 1539, the 16th of February, Luther commanded public prayers to be made for the day at Frankfort, that peace might be confirmed. For if the Landgrave be incensed, then all resistance will be in vain. The Landgrave neither provoketh nor giveth occasion to wars; but, on the contrary, when he is provoked, he still seeketh peace; whereas, notwithstanding, he is better furnished and provided for wars than his adversary is, by 2,000 horse, for Hessen and Saxon are horsemen; when they are set in the saddle, they are then not so easily hoisted out again. As for the high-country horsemen, they, said Luther, are dancing gentlemen. God preserve the Landgrave; for a valiant man and Prince is of great importance. Augustus Cæsar was wont to say, “I would rather be in an army of stags, where a lion is general, than to be in an army of lions where a stag is general.”

The 25th of February, Luther prayed again with great devotion for peace, and for the day at Frankfort, that through civil wars (which are most hurtful), the religion, policy, and God's Word might not be sophisticated and torn in pieces. Wars are pleasing to those that have had no trial or experience of them ; God bless us from wars.

THE END.

Will be published shortly.

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